

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REACTION

by

R. OSBORN



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FREUD AND MARX

THE PSYCHOLOGY
OF REACTION

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LONDON

VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD

1938

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY PURNELL AND SONS, LTD. (T.U.)
FAULTON (SOMERSET) AND LONDON

PREFACE

FASCISM, THE MAIN contemporary form of reaction, is basically an economic and political phenomenon. But it owes a great deal of its strength to the existence of certain characteristics of contemporary human nature which respond to Fascist propaganda. Fascist propaganda has been able to excite passions of race and national hatred which to-day gravely endanger the peace of the world. Millions of people have been deluded into placing their fates unquestioningly into the hands of accomplished demagogues who use the trust reposed in them for the ends of their capitalist paymasters.

The question poses itself irresistibly: What are the human characteristics which, when stimulated by Fascist propaganda, may, for a time, blind millions of men and women to their most urgent economic and political interests? To attempt an answer to this question is the main purpose of this book. The answer to this question will not tell us what Fascism *is*. For Fascism is essentially a political weapon adopted by the ruling class under conditions which we shall discuss. But it will tell us why Fascism sometimes succeeds. It will tell us why Fascist propaganda, heavily subsidised from capitalist sources, sometimes takes root in the minds of millions. For the extent of this propaganda alone cannot account for its success. The truth is that Fascist propaganda appeals to certain uncritical and infantile impulses which, in a people debarred from a rational, healthy existence by a barbaric capitalism, tend to dominate their mental lives.

This fact is eloquently expressed by a recent writer on war. "A war's beginning is not a question of millionaire propaganda sheets infecting millions of controlled, clear-sighted, rational human beings with the war fever. It is

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a question of this propaganda working upon populations largely debarred from all real education, stupefied by the opiates of religion and sub-literature and the glib lies of the films, scarred in mind as well as body by the crippling restrictions of their lives.”¹

The object of this book will be to enquire into the psychological factors which aid the success of Fascist propaganda. For only by understanding these factors can we combat this propaganda.

But, because of the primacy of an economic and political analysis for an understanding of Fascism, I have begun with a brief sketch of the economic and political factors which impel the ruling capitalist class to turn to Fascism. This sketch is little more than a background against which we shall trace the workings of the psychological factors which are the special object of our enquiry. For a more detailed treatment of this economic and political background, the reader is referred to R. P. Dutt's *Fascism and Social Revolution* and John Strachey's *The Menace of Fascism*, to which Part I of this book may serve as an introduction.

This section is followed by an examination of the psychology of nationalism, both in its more rational forms and in its aggressive Fascist form. Anti-Semitism, as a specific form of this aggressive nationalism, is also examined. A chapter is devoted to an enquiry into the psychological compulsions which drive men like Hitler and Mussolini in their lusts for torture and power, and which make them suitable tools for a decaying capitalist system. The theories of Fascism, in particular those of Oswald Spengler, are examined, to show their relationship to capitalist cultural decadence. A chapter is devoted to Trotskyism as a factor which, more and more, is playing a reactionary rôle in world politics.

Throughout suggestions are made, of a tentative nature, as to how Socialists may utilise the science of psychology. Such questions as nationalism and, in particular, leadership

¹ T. H. Wintringham, *The Coming World War*, p. 198.

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and unity, have important psychological implications which need to be understood if Socialists are to win the confidence of the people. This book is a contribution to the fight for the unity of all progressive and working-class elements in society. For by means of such unity alone can we save ourselves from the hell of Fascism.

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PART I

WHAT IS FASCISM?

CHAPTER I

THE DECLINE OF CAPITALISM

THE GROWTH OF political reaction in general, and Fascism in particular, is the product of certain features of the contemporary capitalist system.

The main characteristic of contemporary capitalism is that it is unable to utilise, to anything like their full extent, the gigantic powers of wealth production which it has called into being. These means of production, the factories, the mines, the mills, etc., are only set into operation when the capitalist class which owns them, considers that a profit will result. The fact that the products of the factories and mines are needed by millions of people, is not the main concern of the capitalists. For, no matter how urgently boots or coal or clothing are needed by the mass of the people, none of these things will be produced unless, at the same time, a profit can be made. That is why, in capitalism, we have the spectacle of millions of unemployed, skilled and able to produce; factories standing idle in which the unemployed could work, and millions needing the products which would result from bringing the unemployed and the idle factories together. The private ownership of the factories stands between the skilled, able and willing unemployed, and the idle factories. The demand for profits bars the way to producing in order to satisfy the needs of the people. Such is capitalism.

Can anyone really deny that our physical needs could be easily and plentifully supplied, to-day, *if* social welfare took precedence to the private profits of the minority of capitalist owners? Many years ago the late Lord Leverhulme said: "With the means that science has already placed at our disposal, we might provide for all the wants of each of us in food, shelter and clothing by one hour's

work per week for each of us from school age to dotage.”¹ In 1932, fourteen years after this statement of Lord Leverhulme, a paper was read before the Royal Society of Arts, on “Industrial and Communal Waste”, by J. L. Hodgson. Quoting Lord Leverhulme’s statement, he said: “since that date our average potential productivity has nearly doubled.”

According to the League of Nations Economic Section, world production of foodstuffs and raw materials increased, between 1913 and 1928, by 25 per cent, of foodstuffs alone by 16 per cent, of raw materials by 40 per cent, and industrial production by an even greater rise. Against this enormous rise in world’s resources the population figures increased by only 10 per cent. While this is an effective answer to those who believe that poverty is due to over-population, it also shows that capitalism is unable to place these enormous advances in productive capacity at the service of mankind. For the poverty which exists to-day is a poverty in the midst of plenty.

So glaring is the discrepancy between the possibilities of life and the actualities afforded by capitalist society, that even capitalist politicians cannot but notice it. But they steadfastly refuse to acknowledge that this discrepancy is the result of the private ownership of the means essential for the life of the whole of society. Instead, they fling bewildered arms to the air and ask, with Winston Churchill, “Who would have thought that cheap and abundant supplies of all the basic commodities should find science and civilisation unable to utilise them? Had all our triumphs of research and organisation bequeathed us only a new punishment—the curse of plenty?”²

This inability of capitalism to utilise the means of wealth production is a constant feature. But it varies in degree from time to time. Periodically the “curse of plenty” has appeared in an acute form in the history of capitalism. It has appeared in the number of crises which

¹ Preface to Professor Spooner’s *Wealth and Waste*.

² Romanes Lecture, 1933.

have occurred at something like ten yearly periods since 1850. These crises have been marked by accumulations of stocks of goods, on the one hand, and the inability of people to purchase them, on the other. The private ownership of the means of life has made it impossible for these stocks of goods to reach the people who needed them. Hence these crises express in an acute form the inability of capitalism to control and use the gigantic productive powers for the benefit of society. There is a basic contradiction, exposed in its sharpest form, during the crises. That is the contradiction between the ever-growing forces of production, which require wider and wider masses of workers to set into operation, and the narrow, private ownership of these forces of production. In other words, production grows more *social* while ownership retains its private individual character.

Moreover, the increase in productive capacity is not followed by a like increase in the workers' share of the wealth produced. For the capitalists, competing with one another for markets, seeking the maximum of profit, are driven to restrict the wages of the workers to the lowest possible level.¹ In this way the home market tends to contract relatively to the increase in productive capacity, for the workers, whose wages do not keep pace with the increase, form by far the larger section of the community. This inability of the workers to buy back a large part of the products which they have produced, is a basic condition of the crisis.²

The path of a crisis is a fairly well defined one. There is a boom period in which production rises steeply. There is a mad rush to make profits; goods are turned out in

¹ Thus in Great Britain between the years 1924 and 1930 the output per person employed *increased* from 100 to 113. The proportion of wages to home-produced income *fell* from 41.5 per cent to 38 per cent. (Colin Clark, *The National Income*.)

² This portion of the products of labour which the workers cannot purchase, represents the surplus value appropriated by the capitalist class by virtue of their ownership of the means of production. It is the source of the profit, interest, and rent which are divided between that class.

frantic haste; shares rise and everything is rose-hued in the capitalist world. A boom period such as we are experiencing to-day has been vividly described by Engels. "It is a frantic struggle which carries away even the most experienced and phlegmatic; goods are spun, woven, hammered, as if all mankind were to be newly equipped, as though two thousand million new consumers had been discovered in the moon."¹

But inevitably the demand for goods is satisfied and the producers find themselves with large stocks of goods on hand. There is no means, under capitalism, of gauging how much the market will absorb and how much one's competitors will produce. Each seeks his own profit, thrusting his goods forward in the hope that they will outcompete the other's. With unsaleable goods on hand, financial commitments which cannot be met because the goods cannot be sold, many capitalists go to the wall.

A crop of bankruptcies takes place, leaving those capitalists able to weather the storm, severely shaken. These latter begin to adopt methods by which to emerge from the crisis. They strengthen themselves at the expense of those who have been crushed by the crisis, absorbing their businesses, concentrating larger masses of capital in their hands. They reorganise their own technique, improving it so that production may take place more efficiently with proportionately fewer workers. They destroy parts of the accumulated stocks in order to raise prices. They seek for new markets and penetrate further and further afield with their goods. The crisis passes. The reorganisation of industry involved in the improving of technique creates employment for the production of machinery, etc. This employment involves an increased demand for commodities to be consumed, food, clothing, etc., by the workers employed. This demand, in turn, involves employment in the production of these consumers' commodities, which again involves a demand for the machinery used in this production. And, thus, a cycle of production commences,

¹ *Conditions of the Working Class*, p. 84.

activity increases, optimism returns, the mad rush for maximum profits recurs, the new markets, in turn, become glutted and crisis reappears.

Each crisis reproduces, on a greater scale, the contradictions of capitalism. For each crisis involves the wiping out of smaller and less efficient concerns and the concentration of more and more capital in fewer and fewer hands. Each crisis involves an expansion into fresh markets, an increased efficiency of production. Thus as crisis follows crisis, capital becomes concentrated in fewer hands, while the productive powers grow in size. The contradiction of private ownership of the means of production and the social character of production grows more intense.

In the early days of capitalism it was relatively easy to overcome the crises. Great Britain, as the first industrial country, had the world at its feet. It had no competitors and almost illimitable possibilities of expansion. The crises acted as stimuli to develop the markets abroad. England became the workshop of the world. At this period of England's life, "free-trade" assumed, in the minds of British capitalists, the character of an immutable law of nature. God had ordained that England should be free to produce industrial goods to send all over the world, while other nations, meekly and gratefully supplied, in return, the raw material and agricultural produce that England needed. This idyllic arrangement was at the time described as follows: "It is clearly seen that to our beloved land Great Britain has been assigned the high mission of manufacturing for her sister nations. Our kin beyond the sea shall send to us in our ships their cotton from the Mississippi Valley. India shall contribute its jute, Russia its hemp and flax, Australia its finer wools and we with our supplies of coal and ironstone for our factories and workshops, our skilled mechanics and artificers and our vast capital, shall invent and construct the necessary machinery and weave these materials into fine cloth for the nations; all shall be fashioned by us and made fit for the use of men. Our ships, which reach us laden with raw materials, shall

return to all parts of the earth laden with these our higher products made from the crude. This exchange of raw for finished products under the decrees of nature makes each nation the servant of the other and proclaims the brotherhood of man. Peace and goodwill shall reign upon the earth, one nation after another must follow our example and free exchange of commodities shall everywhere prevail. Their ports shall open wide for the reception of our finished products as ours are open for their raw material."¹

But the other countries refused to remain markets for England's industrial products. They too had a capitalist class which, although belated in its development, began, none the less, most effectively to shatter the above delightful dream. When these capitalists achieved power in their own countries they raised import barriers against British goods behind which they developed their own industries. Their goods began to compete with British goods in the markets of the world, and soon constituted a serious challenge to Britain's monopoly of the world market. By 1913, for example, Britain still led in the world's markets with 13.11 per cent of the total exports, but Germany had crept up to 12.39. The intense competition which resulted, took the form of a grab for land, in order to ensure special trading preserves for the national capitalist classes. In this land grab, Britain again led, France following closely and Germany lagging in the rear.

The process is described by Major-General J. F. C. Fuller: "As regards aggression the years 1870-98 are only equalled by the age of Ghengis Khan. Between 1870 and 1900 Great Britain acquired 4,754,000 square miles of territory, adding to her population 88,000,000 people; between 1884 and 1900 France acquired 3,583,000 square miles and 36,553,000 people; and in these same years Germany, a bad last, gained 1,026,220 square miles and 16,687,100 people."

¹ Quoted in Knowles' *Industrial and Commercial Revolutions in Great Britain during the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 127-8. (Routledge).

Mighty empires were laid out in order to give preserved areas for the capitalist classes. They were made necessary by the intensity of competition, the needs of capitalism to have markets in which to expand if it is to overcome the crises which periodically reveal its basic instability. That this is the fundamental need of an empire has been clearly stated by Joseph Chamberlain. "The Empire," he declared, is commerce. It was created by commerce, it is founded on commerce and it would not exist a day without commerce. For these reasons, among others, I would never lose the hold which we now have over our great Indian dependency—by far the greatest and most valuable of all customers we have or ever shall have in this country. For the same reasons I approve of the continued occupation of Egypt and lastly it is for the same reasons that I hold that our navy should be strengthened until its supremacy is so assured that we cannot be shaken in any of the possessions which we hold, or may hold hereafter."¹

But markets are not only needed for the export of commodities. A process takes place in the dominating capitalist countries which impels them to export also capital. For the capitalist class, as a result of crises, the concentration of larger masses of capital in fewer hands, finds itself with a surplus of capital. This fact is accentuated by the impossibility of the capitalists spending the huge incomes which they derive from the private ownership of the means of life upon their immediate, personal needs. When these latter have been satisfied, there still remains a large surplus unspent. This surplus purchasing power in the hands of people who do not need it is a striking evidence of the absurdity of the capitalist system.

Increasingly, as the incomes of the capitalists accumulate, the export of capital tends to supplant the export of goods. Loans are made to foreign countries to be expended on machinery, railway equipment, etc., and backward countries become drawn into the sphere of

¹ *Foreign and Colonial Speeches*, p. 101.

industrial activity. Wherever it goes, said Marx, capitalism "creates a world after its own image". Hence, not only does the world become the scene of fiercely aggressive capitalisms engaged in struggle for the world's markets, but incipient capitalisms appear in the very markets for which the powerful groups are struggling. And these capitalisms, nurtured on the loans of their powerful prototypes, begin to raise their tariff barriers, to enter themselves into the world market, and to add to the bitterness of the struggle.

Thus the possibilities of expansion become severely restricted at the point where the need for expansion becomes greater. Such was the situation in the years leading to the last war. The competition between Germany and England, in particular, had grown to an intense pitch. The division of the world had been largely accomplished. To obtain fresh colonies, fresh sources of raw materials and spheres for the absorption of surplus capital, a struggle for *re-division* was inevitable. This was the purpose of the last war. It was a war for the redivision of colonial spoils. It was, therefore, an *imperialist* war.

Imperialism is the first sign that capitalism is declining. It is, says Lenin, "capitalism in that stage of development in which the domination of monopolies and finance capital has taken shape; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world by the international trusts has begun, and in which the partition of all the territory of the earth by the greatest capitalist countries has been completed."

The extent of this decline was revealed with the ending of the post-war "boom". The activity which followed the war years, the reconstruction of neglected industries and the repairing of damage done by the war generally, engendered hopes of a stabilised and prospering capitalism which proved illusory. This was acknowledged in the British Government note to the United States regarding the payment of its debts. "The prosperity of the period from 1923 to 1929 was to a large extent illusory, and the seeds

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of future trouble had already been sown." In 1929, as everyone knows, there broke out the severest slump in the history of capitalism. It revealed the extent to which capitalist decline had gone.

The unique character of this slump can be seen from the following figures. They show an unprecedented fall in world trade as a result of the slump. Whereas the fall in world trade between 1929 and 1932 was over 50 per cent, previous crises show no fall greater than 7 per cent. Thus the crisis of 1873-4 showed a fall in world trade of 5 per cent, in 1883-4 a fall of 4 per cent, in 1890-1 it increased 0.5 per cent, in 1900-1 a fall of 1 per cent and 1907-8 a fall of 7 per cent.

The League of Nations World Economic Survey, 1932-3, said, "There is no precedent for such a marked decline. Statistical series ranging back to 1860 fail to reveal any previous period in which the decline in either raw material production or manufactures has been so precipitate or so severe. Independent estimates agree that in 1932 the level of industrial production in the world fell below that of 1913."

The crisis which began in 1929 differed from all other of the crises which had convulsed capitalism periodically. The old crises had occurred in a capitalist world capable of expansion, of overcoming the crises in the manner already described. But the crisis of 1929 took place in a capitalist world which had begun to decline.

Because this crisis took place in a capitalist world already in a state of decline, the method of overcoming the crisis was adapted to this fact of decline. Previously, expansion in the world's markets, after technical reorganisation and partial destruction of stocks of goods, had provided the means of emerging from the crisis. But expansion is no longer possible. In a capitalist world of decay, there is only one method by which the pressure of the crisis may be temporarily allayed, and that is organised destruction of the forces of production. This is the method which predominated in the 1929-33 crisis. In the United States,

for example, vast sums were allotted by the Government for the purpose of destroying wealth. The following table gives some idea of the extent of this policy of destruction.

EXPENDITURE UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT
ADMINISTRATION

<i>Allocation</i>	<i>Approx. sum</i>
Cotton acreage ploughed up	110 million dollars
1934 cotton acreage reduction	150
Emergency pig-sow slaughter	33
Corn-hog production control	350
Wheat acreage reduction	102
Tobacco acreage reduction	21

In Britain a company was formed called the "National Shipbuilders Security Ltd." Its main purpose was to "assist the shipbuilding industry by the purchase of redundant and/or obsolete shipyards, the dismantling and disposal of their contents, and the re-sale of their sites under restrictions against further use for shipbuilding". The Clyde has lost fifteen shipyards owing to its workings. The general outlook of capitalism was expressed by Neville Chamberlain as follows: "To allow production to go on unchecked and unregulated in these modern conditions when it could almost at a moment's notice be increased to an almost indefinite extent is absolute folly."¹

The inability of capitalism, in the period of its decline, to use the forces of production, even to destroy them, has its counterpart in the permanent mass of unemployed. This enormous army of unemployed has been recognised by a Government commission to be characteristic of the modern stage of British industry. The Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance (1932) said, "It is now clear that the greater part of the unemployment of the period 1923 to 1929 was not due to trade depression, but was of a more persistent character due to causes that were not

¹ House of Commons, June 2nd, 1933.

transient. . . It is, of course, true that the present depression has involved workers who have every prospect of re-employment when industry generally improves. But the difference remains that the unemployment caused by trade depression will pass, while the other unemployment will persist when trade improves, as it persisted through the good years, 1927 and 1928 . . . associated with some more permanent condition of British industry." Thus not only the inanimate forces of production, the factories, the mills, the mines, the machinery, are becoming unusable to an increasing extent as capitalism declines, but millions of workers, the animate forces of production, are becoming permanently superfluous. In the choice terms of the late Ramsay MacDonald, "Great bodies of men and women, perhaps amounting to a couple of millions, will be found to be, to all intents and purpose, in our society, superfluous scrap."¹

We are now in a period of recovery from the crisis of 1929-33. The most notable industrial expansions have been in the iron and steel trades. During 1936 the production of steel was 11½ million tons, an increase on 1935 of 10½ per cent. Pig-iron increased in production over 1935 by 19½ per cent, to the highest level since 1920. Iron and steel shares which, a short time ago, were worth about one shilling are now fetching fifty shillings. It is significant that these expansions have taken place in industries of direct importance for rearmament. For, to a great extent, the much boasted recovery is the result of more intensive preparations for war, for the destruction, in other words, of wealth and life. While the rearmament expenditure of the Government continues, profits will rise, and recovery will be maintained. "If the programme that has been envisaged is to be carried out," said the Chairman of Martin's Bank, Mr. E. B. Orme, "vast sums have still to be spent, and increasing activity, employment, and apparent prosperity will follow."²

¹ House of Commons, Nov. 22nd, 1932.

² Speech at annual general meeting of shareholders, Jan. 19th, 1937.

But when this rearmament programme is finished, what then? The problem was voiced by Sir Samuel Hoare in a speech towards the end of 1936: "What is to happen to our trade and industry when the great defence programme is completed? We are now embarked on a period of boom. Is it to be followed once again by a slump? The years after the war have their grim lesson."¹

Forebodings of the slump to come are current. Sir William Beveridge, Principal of the London School of Economics, has made the gloomy forecast that with the completion of the rearmament programme, unemployment will soar to the three million mark.²

An intensification of the drive for foreign markets must follow. This is the way out indicated by Mr. Colin F. Campbell, Chairman of the National Provincial Bank. Noting that our industrial activity was "to a certain extent artificial", he pointed out that the rearmament programme was a "temporary matter" and the "day will come when its effect will taper off". "When that time comes . . . it is essential that some other substantial outlet should be found to take up some of the slack that will make its appearance when our armament needs have been satisfied. By far the most promising outlet of this kind seems to be offered by overseas trade. . . ."³

The recovery period is thus a breathing space during which the main energies of capitalism can be devoted to the development of the weapons of modern warfare. When the plans for their increased efficiency have been fulfilled it will then be necessary to search for foreign markets. The struggle for markets will take place between capitalist powers, armed to the teeth, desperately needing these markets and equipped with all the weapons of warfare to secure them. Recovery has been achieved at the expense of bringing the world to the brink of a new, and more terrible, imperialist war.

¹ *Reynolds*, Jan. 17th, 1937.

² *New Leader* report, Feb. 5th, 1937.

³ Jan. 28th, 1937.

Such is the world of capitalism to-day. It is a world in which the contrast between the powers of wealth production and the poverty of the masses has reached extraordinary dimensions. It is a world that has lost for ever any justification that capitalism might have had. For, at one time, in spite of the suffering and hardship it imposed, capitalism performed an historically necessary rôle. That society was occasionally confronted with the absurd contrast of unsaleable stocks of goods and people needing them but unprovided by capitalism with the means to purchase them, had this justification. The blind pressure of these crises resulted in an expansion of production, a reorganisation of technique, the opening up of new lands, the bringing together of masses of capital so that production took on a social character—all necessary prerequisites for a Socialist society. For Socialism demands a high development of production if it is to place human needs before private profit. So that although capitalism's methods were crude and barbarous, nevertheless, in laying the foundation for the future Socialist society, they received a measure of justification.

But capitalism no longer has this justification. It is now intent on destroying wealth, on frustrating the creative impulses inherent in society. It beseeches its scientists and inventors not to embarrass it with their discoveries; it diverts science into the destructive channels of war preparation; it has had its day but refuses to depart.

With Engels we must say to the capitalist class, "Stand back! give the working class the chance of a turn." But that is precisely what the capitalist class will not do. Having outlived its historical usefulness, it clings desperately to its privileged position.

CHAPTER II

THE REPUDIATION OF DEMOCRACY

THE ECONOMIC DECLINE of capitalism has an important political consequence. This is the tendency now observable in almost every capitalist country, to turn away from democratic forms of government.

Parliamentary democracy developed during the period of capitalist expansion. Then the prospering capitalist class was able to afford numerous concessions to the working class. It extended the basis of democracy by giving the vote to every adult man and woman, it allowed the workers to organise industrially and politically, it regulated factory conditions, and so forth. It did these things partly in response to agitation from the workers. The Chartist movement, for example, waged a heroic struggle for manhood suffrage, payment of Members of Parliament, rights of workers' organisations, etc. But it also did these things because its clearer-sighted politicians saw them as necessary sops to prevent the workers making a more fundamental challenge. In other words, they were premiums against workers' revolt, which an expanding capitalism could well afford to pay.¹

By such means democracy was made to appear as an instrument by which the workers could progressively, if gradually, improve their conditions of life. By organisation, agitation, parliamentary representation, all within the framework of democracy, the aspirations of the working class could be achieved. The fact that the improvements secured by the workers' organisations were only partly due to their own agitation and pressure was obscured. They were a price by which the workers' acquiescence in

¹ For example, in regard to the Ten Hours Act, it was observed at the time that this act had "instilled attachment to Government and Parliament" and had "eradicated an enormous mass of discontent". See Allen Hutt, *This Final Crisis*, p. 54. (Gollancz.)

the continuance of capitalism was won. But the bulk of the workers and their parliamentary and trade union leaders saw only the achievements and were blind to their real purpose.

So long as capitalism was an expanding system the hopes of continued improvement seemed to have a real basis. The conditions of life undoubtedly improved and there seemed no reason why they should not do continuously.

Something of the hope which this continued expansion bred in the hearts of men is described by John Strachey.

Nor did this hope lack substance and basis. During the last century, in the favoured countries of the West, the conditions of life for many millions did undoubtedly improve. Over and above this material improvement, the obstacles to a far greater, far swifter, improvement in material conditions seemed one by one to be giving way. Liberty, democracy, were step by step achieved. . . . The hope of swift educational progress, of the dawn of liberty, of equality of opportunity, of the gradual abolition of force and violence from the life of society, of the possibility of international peace, of the general broadening of the physical and cultural benefits of civilisation till they touched the whole community—the hope of all this seemed brighter and surer than at any time before in human history.”¹

To-day these hopes have received a severe setback. For the era of capitalist expansion upon which they were based is over. Capitalism in decline no longer holds out prospects of gradual and continuous improvement in the conditions of the people. On the contrary, the capitalists, faced with dwindling markets and more acute competition, are not only unwilling to make further concessions; they also seek to curtail existing concessions, declaring them to be intolerable burdens on industry.

This is why the capitalist class now tends to set its face against democracy. This is why democracy is declared to

¹ John Strachey, *The Menace of Fascism*, p. 29. (Gollancz.)

be "unworkable", "inefficient", by an increasing number of capitalists. For while democracy exists the working class is still free to agitate and make protests against the restriction of concessions. It is still free to set its own demands for better conditions against the demands of the employers. While the workers are free to do this, the capitalists are compelled to proceed slowly and cautiously in their inroads on existing concessions.

Hence, in every capitalist country, powerful groups of capitalists who had in the past realised the utility of democracy, are now openly repudiating it. A typical expression of this dissatisfaction with democracy was made by a leading capitalist, Mr. Gordon Selfridge, before the American Chamber of Commerce, in London. He declared that "as an American he spoke to fifty representative men in America, and did not find one who disagreed with his view that democracy in that great country could not possibly succeed as a system of government . . . a country should be managed as a great business was managed".¹

In other words, the mass of the people should have just as little say in the government of the country as they have in the conduct of a "great business".

The view that the liberties of democracy "paralyse" executive action has also received ecclesiastical expression. The Archbishop of York, broadcasting on May 30th, 1935, said: "The liberty that rested on self-hood and self assertiveness was doomed and justly doomed. The freedom which Mussolini wiped out in Italy was deeply corrupt; the freedom which Hitler obliterated in Germany was so incapable of fellowship that in the multitude of political parties, always forming new combinations, executive action was paralysed."

Such is the tendency developing in ruling-class circles. Such is the political consequence of the economic decline of capitalism. But just because democracy is increasingly becoming an embarrassment to capitalism, it develops a new meaning for the workers. Let us consider this.

¹ *The Times* June 22nd, 1932.

The organisations of the working class which have grown up within the framework of capitalism, have always exhibited two opposing tendencies.

In the first place, such organisations, by their nature, are fundamentally, though with little consciousness of the fact, challenges to the capitalist system. They serve, in other words, to develop that unity of action and class outlook upon which the overthrow of capitalism ultimately depends. Hence the trade unions were described by Lenin as "schools for socialism".

But this aspect of the workers' organisations is largely obscured during the period of capitalist expansion. For, by means of their adroit policy of concessions, the capitalists can successfully deflect the Socialist challenge implicit in working-class organisations. Thus there is a contrary tendency set up within the workers' organisations which have not reached a high degree of Socialist consciousness. The capitalists are able to influence these organisations through their policy of concessions, to convert them from active challenges to capitalist society, into main pillars of it. In place of a revolutionary outlook, the belief is created that the road to Socialism is a progressive, if somewhat gradual, ascent, through the peaceful accretion of concessions.

But the moment that capitalism enters the phase of its decline, the rôle of concessions assumes a different shape. For concessions, then, are bitterly opposed by the capitalists. They are yielded only in the face of determined working-class action. In consequence they take on quite a new significance. They mark the *strength* of the workers' organisations, the degree of their militancy, whereas previously they had denoted the confident expectations of the capitalists in the continued expansion of their system.

In this connection Professor Laski makes an interesting point, which contrasts the policy of concessions when capitalism can well afford them, with a concession wrung from capitalism, after bitter opposition. "Had President

Hoover established a system of unemployment insurance in 1928 it would have seemed in the next years a wise precaution against the fluctuations of the trade cycle; to establish it in the presence of ten millions of unemployed evokes not a gesture of gratitude but of indignation at its unstatesmanlike postponement. . . For their opponents yield to them in a panic the things, which, as it seemed but the day before, they had declared with passion it was impossible to undertake."¹

This, then, is the reason why the capitalists, in the period of capitalist decline, tend to repudiate democracy and are anxious to suppress working-class movements and to curtail rights of free speech and agitation. These things no longer serve as safety-valves for revolutionary pressure but, on the contrary, encourage the hope, which capitalism can no longer tolerate, that improved conditions may still be obtained. Moreover, the rights of organisation, free speech, etc., become bound up with a resolute policy of class struggle. They cease to be taken for granted as the inevitable phenomena of capitalist society, but tend to appear as dearly won rights which must be courageously defended.

When, therefore, we hear the phrase, "democracy has failed" or has proved "unworkable" we must consider its meaning in the light of the present disfavour in which democracy is held by the capitalist class. We must ask, in other words, in what sense has it failed or proved unworkable. For whom has it failed? We have seen that when capitalism was expanding, democracy was eminently successful in securing the allegiance of the workers to the capitalist system. It succeeded in holding back the workers from revolutionary struggle, replacing the desire for struggle with illusory hopes of peaceful expansion into Socialism. Democracy worked "well" then. But if the capitalists declare that it has become unworkable, it follows that it has become so, precisely because it no longer serves the above purpose. Democracy, which has ceased to serve:

¹ *Democracy in Crisis*, p. 25.

the interests of the capitalists has become a weapon which can be turned against the capitalist class.

The fact, however, that the struggle to defend a democracy which the capitalists are eager to discard is also a revolutionary struggle, has not been seen by many Socialists. Democracy is declared to be a failure also, from the socialist point of view. The failure of the Labour Governments, it is asserted, has proved that there is no easy, untraversed path to Socialism, but a path of struggle.

The Labour Governments saw in parliamentary democracy an alternative to class struggle. The Labour leaders believed that a policy of social reforms could peacefully achieve improvements in the standards of the workers which, in time, would broaden into Socialism. But they reckoned without the fact of capitalist decline. The reality of office, however, brought them rudely up against this decline. The pension, insurances, and other social services which had seemed within reasonable attainment when the chief consideration was the framing of election programmes, appeared, once office was achieved, in a different light. The Labour Governments discovered that such social reforms were dependent on the conditions of capitalist economy, rather than on the enlightened enthusiasm of legislators. Both the periods of office of the Labour Government were periods which revealed, with exceptional clarity, the declining fortunes of capitalist economy. The Labour Governments were faced, therefore, with the alternatives of pushing forward their policies of social reform in the face of capitalist opposition, or of legislating for capitalism in decline. Nothing was more natural than that these Governments should betray an indecisiveness before these alternatives. For the illusion of peaceful, gradual transformation of capitalism by means of social reform, left them unprepared for the challenging facts of capitalist decline. The last Labour Government hesitatingly imposed some extensions of existing social service (by means of the Annualities Bill for example), in response to the insistent pressure of the capitalist class. But it shied at the imposition

of more sweeping economy measures, and retreated, in confusion, leaving its most prominent leaders behind.

Thus, the Labour Governments have proved that democracy, conceived as an alternative to struggle, as a more pleasant route to Socialism, has failed. But to repudiate democracy just at the moment when it has become transformed into a weapon to be used against the capitalists, on the grounds that it has "failed" to achieve Socialism, is to empty the baby with the bath. It is to neglect the fact that there is another aspect to democracy than the fostering of illusory hopes. Democracy also involves the rights of workers' organisations to exist, the rights to agitate and to demonstrate, to voice demands and protests. Democracy, stripped of its illusions, leaves this aspect dominant. And it is this aspect of democracy which the capitalists have in mind when they seek to repudiate democracy. It is, as we shall see, the rights of the workers to struggle, which are primarily attacked, when the capitalists move to non-democratic forms of government.

To sum up. The economic decline of capitalism strengthens the forces of political reaction. For a hundred years or more, the anti-democratic, anti-progressive, conservative forces have been held in check. Every attempt to improve the conditions of the people had met with stubborn resistance. But the wiser of the capitalist politicians saw the necessity, during the period of capitalist expansion, to permit the workers to share in capitalist prosperity. They voiced the hopes that material advances bred in the hearts of the people. No one better expressed these hopes than Gladstone. Addressing the reactionary, Tory elements, he cried: "You cannot fight against the future, time is on our side. The great social forces which move onwards in their majesty and might, and which the tumult of our debates does not for a moment impede or disturb—these great social forces are against you; they are marshalled on our side; and the banner which we now carry in this fight though perhaps at some moment it may droop over our sinking heads, yet it soon again will float in the eye

of Heaven, and it will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three kingdoms, perhaps not to an end but to a certain and to a not far distant victory."

Today, political reaction has become dominant in capitalism. In its desperate attempts to extend its lease of life, capitalism strikes at the liberty and progress of which it was once so proud. It attempts to throttle those social forces of which Gladstone spoke.

All lovers of liberty and progress should be gravely disturbed by these tendencies within capitalism. The preservation of elementary democratic rights is a task which requires the unity of all progressive movements. This, unfortunately, has yet to be realised by many progressive individuals and organisations. They are not fully alert to the menace of these reactionary tendencies in along-class politics. This is a matter which will have our attention in a later chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE PIPER AND THE TUNE

WITH THE TENDENCY to repudiate democratic forms of government, the capitalist class turns to more autocratic methods of rule. It proceeds with caution, however, contenting itself, at first, with the curtailment of democratic liberties rather than their complete abolition. This was characteristic of the Brüning Government and its successors in Germany, prior to the complete destruction of democracy by the Nazis. And, to some extent, as we shall see, it is characteristic of the National Government in this country.

This caution is made necessary because the complete repudiation of democratic liberties is a hazardous step. It carries, for example, the danger that, deprived of democratic channels, the masses will turn to revolutionary channels of activity. This must be prevented at all costs. The allegiance of the masses must be won for a political party which, while opposing democracy, holds the masses back from revolutionary action. Such a party would enable the capitalist class to rule without the hindrance of democracy and yet assure the support of a wide mass of people.

In every capitalist country, parties which seek to perform this service for the capitalist class have come into existence. They are the Fascist parties. The purpose of Fascism in relation to democracy has been stated by Hitler and Göring, as follows:

"We must get rid of the last remnants of democracy, especially of the methods of voting and majority decisions as they are still prevalent in some of the municipalities, economic organisations and works committees."¹

"The National Socialist is the deadly enemy of the democratic principle. In the National Socialist State there

¹ Hitler in *Blick in die Zeit*, July 1933.

no voting, no majority. The enforcement of this principle means that Parliament as a Parliament is done with.¹

Fascism is thus the relentless enemy of democracy. It moves at depriving the workers and progressive movements of their rights; their freedom to organise, to strive for better conditions. It is a system of direct dictatorship of the capitalist class, "the most complete and consistent working out, in certain conditions of extreme decay of the most typical tendencies and policies of modern capitalism".²

In following chapters we shall see in more detail why Fascism becomes necessary to the capitalist class. In this chapter, however, we are concerned to establish that behind the Fascist parties are powerful capitalist interests, governing their activities. For there are many people who are deceived by the stream of anti-capitalist propaganda which issues from the Fascist parties into believing that Fascism is a movement of revolt. It will be of value, therefore, to indicate some of the sources of Fascist finance and to show how, prior to the rise to power of a Fascist party, it receives protection and aid from the police and law courts.

Some of the most important sources of Nazi finance are revealed by Mr. Edgar A. Mowrer in his book, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*. Mr. Mowrer was President of the Foreign Press Association in Berlin and representative there of the *Chicago Daily News* immediately prior to the establishment of the Hitler Government. He writes:

According to the conclusions of an investigating committee . . . of the Bavarian Diet, Hitler's financial backers in his early days included a reactionary industrialist, von Borsig of Berlin, two leading figures in the association of Bavarian Industrialists . . . and a high born aristocrat, Prince Arenberg. According to the *Berlin Welt am Abend*

quoting in *Vossische Zeitung*, July 8th, 1933. See *Fascist Germany Today*, by Celia Strachey and J. G. Werner for these and other illuminating quotations on many aspects of German Fascism.

¹ C. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 72.

(December 11th, 1930), the first list should be completed by the addition of two more big industrialists, one baron, one count, Prince Henckel von Donnersmarck, Duke Ludwig Wilhelm of Bavaria and the Duke of Coburg.

. . . In later years, the list of the alleged financial patrons of the National-Socialist movement became extremely long. Factory owners, managers, general councils (syndici) were as thick as they might be on the subscription list of the Republican National Committee in the United States."¹

Another writer declares that since 1927 the chief backer of Hitler has been the Ruhr steel magnate, Thyssen. "Thyssen systematically financed all election funds of the National Socialist Party. He it was who already in 1929 invited Hitler to Dusseldorf, the headquarters of the Steel Trust, and there introduced him for the first time to an assembly of three hundred leading industrialists of the Ruhr. He it was who, three years later, at the beginning of 1932, brought Hitler a second time to Dusseldorf, this time in order to develop his programme for the future before 2,000 German industrialists.

Thyssen persuaded the two political centres of German Ruhr capital, the 'Bergbauverein Essen' and the 'Nordwestgruppe der Eis en-und Stahlindustrie' to agree that every coal and steel concern had, by way of a particular obligatory tax, to deliver a certain sum into the election funds of the National Socialists. In order to raise this money, the price of coal was raised in Germany. For the Presidential elections of 1932 alone, Thyssen provided the Nazis with more than 3,000,000 marks within a few days. Without this help the fantastic measures resorted to by the Hitler agitation in the years 1930-3 would never have been possible."²

Not only in Germany did Hitler have financial backers. Money poured in from powerful capitalist interests all over the world. Mr. Paul Fauré in a speech in the French

¹ E. A. Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, pp. 143-4.

² Ernst Henri, *Hitler over Europe*, pp. 11-12. (Dent.)

Member of Deputies, proved that the Directors of Skoda Armaments firm, controlled by Schneider-Creusot, had fully contributed to Hitler's electoral campaign. Henry Ford financed anti-Semitic propaganda in Germany in the form of reproductions of some articles in his *Whom Independent*. Recently Sir Henri Deterding gave million pounds "to help Germany to solve her food problems and thus strengthen her in the campaign against Bolshevism."¹

Huge subsidies have been received from all parts of the world by dangling the fear of Bolshevism before the capitalists. Hitler agents exist in every capitalist country and their job is to play on this fear of Bolshevism. The following extracts are from a letter written by one of these agents. They expose the close connections between the Nazi movement and international capitalism. The agent says, "For reasons which do not matter here, I had become in 1929 a Hitler agent in the sense that I visited Dr. Bell in England, Professor von Bissing in Holland and Prince Frederick of Prussia in the United States, in their propaganda for Hitler. I was instrumental in bringing about many contributions to the Hitler purse. Two million dollars went through my hands within three years, and found their way ultimately into the Hitler cash box. I want you to understand that I was not a member of Hitler's party, but had only worked for him at the instigation of a group of German industrialists, in the belief that I was a canvasser trying to obtain money for his Party purse. I had my credentials from prominent German bankers and industrialists, who were materially interested that Hitler should exert an influence upon German politics."²

When also we consider the composition of the Supreme Economic Council appointed by the Nazi Government, little doubt can exist as to the relationship between Fascism and big finance.

¹ *Daily Telegraph* report, Dec. 30th, 1936.

² See Johannes Steel, *Hitler as Frankenstein*, p. 97.

The leading members are:

Herr Krupp von Bohlen, armaments king; private fortune, £6,000,000; capital represented, £15,000,000.

Herr Fritz Thyssen, steel king; private fortune, £6,500,000; capital interests German Steel Trust, £540,000,000.

Herr F. C. von Siemens, electrical king; private fortune, £6,500,000; capital represented, £12,500,000.

Professor Karl Bosch, Dye Trust millionaire; private fortune, £2,000,000; capital represented, £55,000,000.

Dr. A. Vogler, German Steel Trust; private fortune, £600,000,000; capital represented, £40,000,000.

Herr A. Diehn, director Potash Syndicate; capital represented, £10,000,000.

Herr Bochringer, director Maximilian Steel Works; capital, £1,500,000.

Herr F. von Schroeder, banker.

Herr A. Von Finck, banker.

Herr F. Reinhart, banker.¹

Such facts as these show how little Fascism is an anti-capitalist movement. It is the tool of big capital posing as an anti-capitalist movement in order to win over the uncritical, backward sections of society. It was able in Germany to exploit both the discontent of the backward workers and the discontent of the middle class crushed by the multiple concerns and driven to despair by the overcrowded professional markets. It played successfully, as we shall see in Chapter XII, on the hatred of the small trader for the large concerns and on the passionate desire of the professional man for security. It did all these things in the interests of its capitalist paymasters. "Fascism resorts to anti-capitalist phraseology," says the Communist International programme, "in periods of acute crisis for the bourgeoisie. But after it has established itself at the helm of the State, it casts aside its anti-capitalist prattle and discloses itself as a terrorist dictatorship of big capital."

¹ See R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 82.

Similarly in Italy did Fascism receive support from the capitalists. During the years 1919, 1920 and 1921, when Fascism was raising its head, huge sums were poured into its coffers by the Italian industrialists. This was admitted by the official historian of the Fascist movement, Professor Volpe, in 1928. This admission, however, says Professor Salvemini, was "prudently suppressed" by Volpe, in the latest form of his study of the Italian Fascist movement.

From their earliest days the Italian Fascists were equipped with rifles and lorries by the army authorities. "Enough to say that the State organs, army, police, magistracy and functionaries, took the side of a wild faction whose methods were at best illegal, at worst abhorrently barbarous. From the army the Fascisti received sympathy, assistance and war material. Officers in uniform took part in its punitive expeditions. The Fascisti were allowed to turn national barracks into their private arsenals. . . . In the presence of murder, violence and arson the police remained 'neutral'."¹

Both Germany and Italian Fascism, therefore, received the support of their respective capitalist classes. Without this support they could never have achieved power. German and Italian capitalists were impelled by certain circumstances to entrust the Fascists with State power. Some of these circumstances we have already discussed. We have discussed, for example, the economic forces of decay which drive the capitalists in the direction of Fascist rule. But a direction or a tendency in capitalist politics is one thing. Its successful realisation is quite another. Why were the capitalists of Italy and Germany successful in establishing Fascism there? Why did not the working class and the progressive movements defeat this tendency towards Fascism before its successful realisation? These are questions which we shall consider in the following chapter.

¹ E. A. Mowrer, *Immortal Italy*, p. 360.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRIUMPH OF FASCISM

THE SUCCESS OF Fascism in both Italy and Germany was, in one aspect, due to the frustration of the revolution which developed in those countries. In the case of Italy the revolution did not get beyond the stage of an acute threat to capitalism. In the case of Germany, the revolution achieved power, only to hesitate at the destruction of capitalism. This hesitation, we shall see, laid the basis for the future Fascist success. Let us consider these countries separately.¹

In Italy a wave of revolutionary feeling succeeded the war. The Italian Socialist Party rose, in membership, from 48,000 in 1914 to 170,000. The reputation of the Italian Socialist Party had been enhanced by the fact that during the war it took a resolute Socialist line. In March 1919 it affiliated to the Communist International and went to the elections of November 1919 with a revolutionary programme of soviets for Italy, and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. In this election it won one-third of the total votes cast, obtained 156 out of 508 seats and was the strongest single party. Its membership increased to 200,000 while that of the Confederation of Labour with which it was allied increased to two millions. The Party also won control over 2,000 Communes, one-third of the total. The extent of the revolutionary wave may be gauged by the fact that in September 1920 half a million workers in Northern Italy, in response to a lock-out by the employers, occupied the factories. The revolution at that time was to be won almost for the asking. As Gaetano Salvemini, one-time Professor of History at the University of Florence, expressed it: "Had

¹ For a fuller analysis the reader is referred to R. P. Dutt's *Fascism and Social Revolution* (Martin Lawrence), pp. 91-142.

the leaders of the General Confederation of Labour and of the Socialist Party wished to strike a decisive blow, here was the opportunity. . . . The bankers, the big industrialists and big landlords waited for the social revolution as sheep wait to be led to the slaughter. If a Communist revolution could be brought about by the bewilderment and cowardice on the part of the ruling classes, the Italian people in September 1920 could have made as many Communist revolutions as they wished."¹

In such favourable circumstances for a successful revolution, the leadership wavered. The Italian Socialist Party, declared the Communist International in October 1920, "acts with too much hesitation. It is not the Party which leads the masses, but the masses which push the Party. . . . In Italy there exists all the necessary conditions for a victorious revolution except one—a good working-class organisation". The Italian Communist Party which might have provided this effective and much needed leadership was not formed until 1921, when the revolutionary wave had subsided. The leaders of the main Socialist Party, although affiliated to the Communist International, had not yet shed their beliefs in the possibility of peaceful transition to Socialism through the use of democratic machinery. They had not grasped the fact that the real dictatorship of the capitalists lay behind the democratic trappings and had to be fought resolutely and with careful preparation. They preferred to rely upon promises of the Government rather than the power of the workers. They ordered the workers to evacuate the factories which they had occupied in September 1920 and conducted long-drawn-out negotiations, which came to nothing, for a share of workers' control in the factories. "What neither the employers, nor the Government, nor the police, nor the armed forces could effect, this was effected by the reformist leadership—to get the workers out of the factories and hand them back to capitalism."²

¹ G. Salvemini, *The Fascist Dictatorship*, 1928, vol. 2, p. 41.

² *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 98.

At the Rome Congress of the Socialist Party in 1922, when the harm had been done and the revolutionary enthusiasm of the workers damped down by disappointments, the leaders of the Socialist Party confessed their mistake. "Our fault is that we never sufficiently prepared ourselves for the events that have overtaken us to-day we believe it essential to abandon the democratic illusion, and to create a combative, active and audacious party." But the absence of a "combative, active and audacious party", a revolutionary party, had already resulted in the stultification of the revolution. Almost coincident with the disastrous evacuation of the factories and their handing back to the capitalists, the Fascist terror took definite shape. The first Fascio di Combattimento was founded in March 1919, in Milan. Its programme was attuned to the revolutionary atmosphere which prevailed, in an endeavour to win the support of the workers. Mussolini even applauded the occupation of the factories, although his party played no rôle in it, describing it as a "great revolution".

Fascism was early recognised by the authorities as an antidote to revolution and received official encouragement and aid. Its paper, the *Popolo d'Italia*, was distributed, without charge, among the troops in order to combat the effect of revolutionary propaganda. However, while the revolutionary upsurge maintained itself, Fascism made no headway, despite this official aid. In the November elections which brought such a triumph to the Socialists, Fascism won no seats. In Milan, where Mussolini was a candidate, he received only 4,795 votes against the 180,000 votes for the Socialist. The workers were unimpressed by the frantic revolutionary utterances of the Fascists, calling for the abolition of the monarchy and nobility, confiscation of war profits, abolition of the stock exchanges, etc. etc. They had faith in their own Socialist leadership and their own class strength and were not to be deflected by the shameless demagoguery of a renegade Socialist. Fascism was, therefore, ineffective so long as

the workers felt that their leaders were prepared to fight on their behalf and that the struggle for Socialism was not futile. But when disappointment followed disappointment and the revolutionary impulses had been thwarted by a hesitant leadership, Fascism began to gain ground and grow bolder. It pursued the workers, forced to retreat by their leaders, with terror. It was protected, as we have seen, by the authorities and received arms and training from army officers.

The Italian Socialist Party has published figures to show the extent of the terror to which it was subjected. Between January and May 1921, 120 Labour headquarters were destroyed, 243 Socialist centres and other buildings were attacked, 202 workers killed, and 1,144 wounded. Between 1921-2 500 Labour halls and co-operative stores were burned and 900 Socialist municipalities were dissolved. Even then the Fascist offensive might have been beaten if the leaders had shown any revolutionary decisiveness. In spite of the disastrous wavering at the height of the revolutionary surge of September 1920, when the workers had occupied the factories, the revolution might still have succeeded, if the leaders had so desired. For in the elections of May 1921 the total Socialist and Communist vote reached 1,861,000 which was only 300,000 short of the figure reached in 1919. 122 Socialists and 16 Communists were elected while only 35 Fascists managed to get seats. But the leaders, unfortunately, once more held the workers back from revolutionary action and urged them to regard the ballot box as the best answer to Fascist terror. "The Italian Proletariat," declared the Socialist paper, *Avanti*, "has submerged the Fascist reaction under an avalanche of red votes." Not content with fostering the illusion that Fascism could be combated through the ballot box alone, the leaders negotiated with Mussolini for a treaty of peace. This severely disarmed the workers who loyally abided by the treaty, while the Fascists went on with their acts of terrorism. In desperation, the Socialist leaders attempted to enter a ministerial coalition, and Turati, the Socialist

leader, interviewed the king with this purpose in view. The attempt failed. The Socialist leaders then decided to bring pressure to bear for the formation of such a ministerial coalition by means of a general strike. There was no preparation for the strike. Its objective was stated to be "in defence of the State". Without preparation and with such a reactionary purpose, the strike could not but fail. Such was the miserable pass to which the Socialist Party was brought. From having the opportunity in its hand to deliver a decisive blow to capitalism in 1920, in 1922, two short years after, it was reduced to petitioning for a ministerial coalition to protect itself from Fascism, and weakly threatening a general strike which it had not the courage to prepare or give a revolutionary objective. At the moment when the workers were in the depths of disappointment, when the abortive general strike had occurred, the Fascists began, in earnest, their preparations for power. The resistance of the workers had been broken by defeat. The moment was ripe for a decisive counter-revolutionary move. On October 28th, 1922, the "march on Rome" commenced. It was organised by six army generals and received the blessing of the Commander in Chief of the Army. The Government made a pretence of declaring martial law, but as the military chiefs were already actively supporting the Fascists, this merely aided in the occupation of the public offices, railways, etc. The king then announced that he had refused to consent to the decree of martial law and it was therefore withdrawn. The Government resigned. Mussolini, waiting in safety in Milan, was invited to come to Rome and form a Ministry. Comfortably ensconced in a *wagon-lit*, Mussolini "marched" into Rome on October 30th, 1922. The full Fascist dictatorship, however, was not established at once. By 1926, after a few years of pretence of maintaining the parliamentary forms, the existence of opposition parties, the Fascist dictatorship was established in full. All opposition parties were crushed, the workers' trade unions were brought under Fascist control which meant

that their right to strike was destroyed. The Fascist dictatorship of the ruling class was realised.

The triumph of Fascism in Italy had been ascribed to the backwardness of Italy. The Italian workers, it was said, were less developed, industrially and politically, than the workers of Germany and France, where the imposition of Fascism would be an impossibility. The success of Fascism in Germany dealt a severe blow to this superficial viewpoint. It illustrated that the success of Fascism depends on the vacillations of the workers' leadership at the moment when power is within reach. If they fear to take the decisive revolutionary steps, then Fascism follows inevitably. The truth of this is even more evident in the case of Germany than in the case of Italy. Let us, therefore, trace the events which lead to the triumph of Fascism in Germany.

In 1918, the workers of Germany rose in revolution and overthrew the old militarist State. All over the country, workers' and soldiers' councils sprang up and the workers' revolution was supreme. The leading Social Democratic theorist, Karl Kautsky, expressed the extent of the victory as follows: "In November, 1918, the Revolution was the work of the proletariat alone. The proletariat won so all-powerful a position that the bourgeois elements at first did not dare to attempt any resistance." With such complete power, it seemed that nothing could prevent the construction of a soviet system, which in alliance with Soviet Russia, would be a formidable challenge to world capitalism. Unfortunately, the leaders of the Social Democratic Party were unprepared to lead the workers to the decisive step of expropriating the capitalist class. The capitalists were allowed to retain possession of the means of production, the factories, mines, etc. Instead of dispossessing them, the Social Democratic leaders exerted every ounce of their influence to restrain the workers. They negotiated a Treaty of Alliance with

the employers, and proceeded to hand back the power won by the workers to the militarists, from whom it had been wrested. This is how the American journalist, Mowrer, describes the action of the Social Democratic leaders. "Fritz Ebert, the saddler-President, Philipp Scheidmann, the tailor, Gustav Noske, the carpenter, snatched it (the power) from the streets where the Communists were about to seize it—and handed it back to the astonished generals. Through patriotism. Through fear of Communism. Through abhorrence of disorder. Through the deference obviously owed by the lower orders to their social superiors. Ebert knew his place."

It is not always realised how firmly founded was the revolution in Germany. The workers were armed, the police were loyal to the revolution, and everywhere there was widespread enthusiasm and expectation of a Socialist Germany. The capitalist class was powerless; it dared offer no resistance, the road was clear for the consummation of the revolution in the socialisation of the means of production.

If this had been done, the history of Germany and contemporary Europe would have been vastly different. Fascism would never have raised its head in Germany, and the advance to Socialism would have received a mighty impetus the world over.

But this was not to be. Instead of destroying the power of the old régime, the Social Democratic Government formed a coalition with the Catholic Centre Party and began to disarm the workers. Special corps, under reactionary officers, were organised, which swept through the streets, murdering workers, beating them up, in the task or "restoring order". The leaders of that small but valiant group, the Spartacists, which had fought in vain against the restoration of capitalist power, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg, were murdered by officers who were allowed to go unpunished. The German revolution suffered defeat at the hands of the accredited leaders of the workers' movement. The first President of the German republic

which resulted from the coalition with the Catholic Centre Party, formed an alliance with the generals "to fight Bolshevism, and Sovietism and restore law and order. . . ." This was revealed in evidence by General Groener who was Chief of the General Staff at the time of the November Revolution, during a libel case in Munich, in November 1925. "Every day between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m. the staff of the High Command talked to Ebert on a special secret telephone. From November 10 our immediate object was to wrest power in Berlin out of the hands of the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."

Thus were the workers restrained by the Social Democratic leaders from pursuing the logic of their seizure of power. They were told that the struggle against the capitalists was too hazardous, that it would lead to foreign capitalist intervention, and a terrible civil war. The workers were counselled to wait patiently for the Socialism which a progressive policy, within an enlightened and free republic, would eventually achieve. The establishment of the republic was the first step in this direction. Then, with the exercise of the electoral rights which such a republic bestowed and protected, the rights of organisation, free speech and Press, the movement towards Socialism could be made calmly, legally, and progressively. Such was the glowing prospect for which the workers were invited to barter the reality of power which resided in their Councils of Workers and Soldiers, their possession of arms. They were invited to exchange the reality of to-day, for the illusory hopes of to-morrow.

The Social Democratic leaders had their way. The Weimar Republic, described as the "freest democracy in the world" by the Social Democrats, was established. By an elaborate system of proportional representation, and extensive rights of workers' organisations and freedom of speech and Press, the promise of unending progress seemed real. But the essential power remained in the hands of the capitalist class and the republic inevitably became a mask behind which capitalism ruled, undisturbed. The extent

to which the republic, in reality, maintained the old régime is described by Mowrer as follows:

“What can be said for a republic that allows its laws to be interpreted by monarchist judges, its government to be administered by old-time functionaries brought up in fidelity to the old régime; that watches passively while reactionary school-teachers and professors teach its children to despise the present freedom in favour of a glorified feudal past; that permits and encourages the revival of the militarism which was chiefly responsible for the country’s previous humiliation?

“What can be said for democrats who subsidise ex-princes who attack the régime; who make the exiled ex-Emperor the richest man in deference to supposed property rights. . . This remarkable republic paid generous pensions to thousands of ex-officers and civil servants who made no bones of their desire to overthrow it.”¹

Inevitably the enthusiasm for this “freest republic” began to wear thin. For German industry was unable to buttress this enthusiasm with concessions on hours and wages which, we have seen, are the indispensable conditions for the existence of capitalist democracy. The inflationary period which followed the war, the burdens placed upon German industry by reparation demands and transferred to the backs of the workers, combined to make the conditions of the German workers indescribable. The revolutionary forces which had been held in check by the first flush of the republic, began to raise their head once again. The German working class once again was ready for revolution. In 1923 a series of strike waves commenced in the industrial areas and the influence of the Communists grew tremendously. It needed only a resolute call for revolt for the workers to arise and bring the already tottering capitalist system to the ground. And, once again, decisive revolutionary leadership was lacking. The German Communist Party was young and inexperienced. It had saddled itself, as had the Social Democratic Party, with a

¹ E. A. Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, pp. 17-19.

weak and vacillating leadership. Although the Communist International considered that the German workers had a favourable opportunity of obtaining power, and instructions had been sent by the Central Committee of the German Communist Party to the most important centres of Germany to urge the Communists there to prepare, the weak leadership sent couriers to cancel these instructions almost on the eve of the revolution. In one place only was this cancellation not received. In Hamburg, the German Communists gallantly played their part, ignorant that the rest of the country was not rising. They boldly occupied the central points of the town, in correct revolutionary fashion. But they were defeated, their efforts rendered abortive, because a cowardly leadership had shrunk back dismayed at the moment when action was imperative.

Once again, as in Italy, the reactionary forces began to gather at the moment of the worst depths of depression of the revolutionary movement. Fascism began to stir and Hitler pushed forward to build his party upon a mass basis. He had already made one attempt for power in 1923, together with Ludendorff. This attempt, however, miserably failed, but the failure taught him that power depended not merely on the support of generals and Officers. It depended mainly upon the establishment of one's party upon a mass basis. Accordingly the efforts of the National Socialists were directed to the end of winning mass support for the party. By May 1924 the National Socialist vote challenged the six millions of the Social Democrats and the three and a half millions of the Communists with a figure just under two millions. At this time, however, foreign loans began pouring into Germany, rebuilding its industries, and effecting a measure of stabilisation. This, naturally, revived the hopes for peaceful expansion and progressive improvement upon which the Social Democratic Party was based. As a result the Nazis made no headway and the Social Democratic influence began to mount once more. By 1928 the Social Democratic vote had risen to 4.1 millions while the Nazi vote had fallen from nearly

two millions, in 1924, to eight hundred thousand. But this advance of Social Democracy was based upon the illusions of the post-war stabilisation and boom which were rudely shattered with the opening of the world crisis. The onset of the economic crisis of 1929 destroyed the basis for the hopes, nurtured by the Social Democrats, that peaceful and progressive expansion of the living conditions of the workers was now possible. Fascism leapt forward in these conditions of disillusionment. In the elections of September 1930 they registered stupendous gains. From under a million votes they reached a figure of over six millions. In the Presidential elections of April 1932 the figure soared to 13.4 millions. In July 1932 the highest point was reached, prior to their accession to power, with the figure of 13.7 millions. This tremendous increase in Fascist influence reflected the fact that the capitalist class had decided to develop the Fascist Party as a means of replacing the democratic forms of government. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, they poured their funds into the Fascist coffers in preparation for such an occasion. It was becoming increasingly necessary to curtail the rights of workers' organisations, to withdraw the gains of the revolution. The policy of concessions, which had ensured the influence of Social Democracy, had to be replaced by a policy of drastic economies. A governmental form was required which permitted these attacks to be carried out without obstruction from Parliament or democratic institutions. The first attempts took the form of the Brüning Government. Although Parliament was formally still in existence, the Brüning Government ruled by decrees, only calling Parliament together to ratify its decisions. During its life-time of eighteen months, the average wage of the German worker was reduced from 42s. 2d. to 22s. 6d. Unemployment benefit also fell to an average of 9.3s. a week. The figure of unemployment soared to the colossal heights of five millions registered unemployed. The Brüning Government under which these things occurred, a government ruling by decree, received the support of

the Social Democrats. They declared that it was an alternative to Fascism, the "lesser evil". The Social Democratic paper described the Brüning Government as "indispensably necessary to prevent political and economic chaos. This being the situation, the Social Democratic Party adopted a policy of toleration with the express intention of making a Fascist seizure of power impossible and so prevent the unemployed from being sacrificed by a Fascist régime in the steadily worsening crisis".¹ This support of the Brüning Government by the Social Democrats was fatal. It prevented that unity with the revolutionary forces which alone would have enabled the workers to resist the terrific onslaughts of the capitalists. It resulted in a disorganisation of the workers' ranks, and permitted Fascism to capitalise much of the disillusionment which followed. The loss of prestige for the Social Democrats which resulted, was reflected in the fall in their votes. In the period between 1930 and 1932 they lost 1,338,000 votes, while the Communists gained approximately the same number. The more class-conscious of the workers were consequently passing to the revolutionary camp, while the less politically-conscious were succumbing to Fascist demagoguery.

The unpopularity of the Brüning Government, with its notorious "hunger decrees", compelled President Hindenburg to dissolve it and to appoint, as chancellor, von Papen. Automatically, the Social Democrats, who had supported the Brüning Government, now transferred their support to von Papen. In his turn, he was the "lesser evil" to Hitler. As a reward, von Papen wrote a page in the history of German Social Democracy which made Socialists hot with shame all over the world. In Prussia the Government was controlled by the Social Democrats. This Government ruled over some two-thirds of Germany and controlled 67,000 armed police, which, next to the regular army, was the largest force in Germany. Carl Severing, the Social Democratic Minister for the Interior "entirely

¹ *Vorwärts*, May 30th, 1932.

disposed of the Republican private organisation, the Reichsbanner, with its powerful auxiliaries, the Socialist Sporting organisations and the industrial sabotage groups, the Hammer squads. As Labour leader, he had decisive influence over the larger trade unions, the Allgemeine Gewerkschaftsbund. As a Social Democrat official, he still commanded the loyalty of about eight million voters. . . ."¹ Such were the forces at the disposal of the legally elected Prussian Social Democratic Government. Von Papen decided to dismiss this Government. A captain of the Reichswehr and fifteen infantrymen were instructed to turn the governmental leaders out of their offices. The whole police force of Prussia, eight million Social Democratic voters and five million Communists, waited for the word. But "the guardians of the democratic republic allowed themselves to be swept from office without a blow, like so many hired servants. . . . All over Germany Socialists who read the news of the ignominious dismissal of Braun and Severing waited for the inevitable answer—the general strike—and waited in vain."²

In this connection some comments from the famous Berlin Diaries are of interest as revealing the attitude in high governmental circumstances towards Social Democracy. These Diaries were written by high military officials during the period from the Brüning Government to the appointment of Hitler as chancellor.³ One of their writers was the ill-fated General Schleicher who was murdered by the Nazis in June 1934. They reveal the deep contempt in which the Social Democratic leaders were held, and which alone could have decided Papen to take an otherwise hazardous step. They also reveal the grudging admiration for a courageous opponent, which the Communist Party drew from the ruling circles in Germany.

1st July, 1932. "The Communist counter-movement against the Papen policy is splendid. If only the Social

¹ Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, p. 204.

² Ibid, p. 7.

³ *The Berlin Diaries*, Volume I. Volume II carries on from the appointment of Hitler until June 1934.

Democrats, who are terrified to death of a united Red Front, in case it should prejudice their party, wouldn't keep on putting obstacles in the way! Much might be effected but for that. . . ."

2nd July, 1932. "The Social Democratic Party have produced another brilliant turn. This morning *Vorwärts* was still shrieking that the Papen plan meant a *coup d'état* and threatening that the Social Democracy would fearlessly combat it 'with every means at their disposal'. A few hours later the Communists called a general strike against Papen and the hearts of the whole Social Democratic Party sank to their boots. They distribute millions of pamphlets declaring that 'the Communist demand for a strike has been deliberately engineered by the Hitlerites as an act of provocation'."

Without a doubt the bulk of the Social Democratic workers would have responded loyally to the call for a general strike. But instead the Socialist and trade union leaders exerted their influence to restrain the workers. As a *Times* report puts it, these leaders had great difficulty in maintaining "the discipline of the rank and file, as the bitterness of the German working class have reached boiling point". On the other hand the prestige of the Communists rose. Revolutionary propaganda began to take effect and during 1932 a high wave of resistance developed amongst the workers, led by the Communists. In November 1932 the Berlin Transport strike broke out, led by the Red trade union opposition, after the men's vote for a strike had been turned down by the trade union officials. The November elections also revealed the ascendancy of this wave of resistance, for the Communists were the only party to increase their votes. They almost reached the figure of six million, gaining seven hundred thousand which, significantly enough, was the figure by which the Social Democratic vote was reduced. The Nazi vote sank by over two million. This rise in working-class influence, and the melting of the Nazi votes, made it imperative for the capitalists to act quickly. "After the losses of the National

Socialists in the Reichstag elections of November," comments an American writer, "German 'Big Business' decided that the immediate danger was that the National Socialist Party might disintegrate too rapidly."¹

Von Papen resigned on November 17th, 1932, and General Schleicher took his place. Meanwhile, Hitler was negotiating with von Hindenburg, and, to gain time, Schleicher relaxed many of the decrees regarding the Press, trade union activities, etc. He disarmed the trade union leaders by making overtures to them for an alliance. The Schleicher Ministry was shortlived. He had prepared the ground and gave way to Hitler. On January 30th, 1933, Hitler was appointed Chancellor. There was no dramatic *coup d'état*, no "revolution"; Hitler was placed into power at the bidding of the German ruling class, by President Hindenburg. The latter had received the support of the Social Democrats during the Presidential elections, as the "lesser evil" to Hitler. Once more the policy of the "lesser evil" reaped its reward.

The appointment of Hitler did not completely destroy the chances of workers' revolution. There was still time to defeat Fascism and the Communists urged for a general strike. This was rejected by the Social Democrats on the grounds that Hitler had been appointed "constitutionally" and it was therefore advisable to await the general elections of March. But the appointment of Hitler as Chancellor was at the same time an indication to Hitler from the ruling class that the time had come to unleash Fascist terror against the workers. The Social Democratic and Communist Press were suppressed, leading Socialists and Communists were beaten up, murdered and imprisoned; workers' demonstrations were banned, and the approach to the March elections took place in conditions of indescribable terror. Göring issued a manifesto to the Prussian police instructing them to protect all national organisations but to use the strongest measures against oppositional organisations. The manifesto reads as follows: "I do not

¹ C. B. Hoover, *Germany Enters the Third Reich*, p. 83.

think it necessary to point out that the police must, in all circumstances, avoid even the appearance of a hostile attitude towards . . . the national associations and parties.

. Moreover, every kind of activity for national purposes and national propaganda is to be thoroughly supported. On the other hand, the activities of organisations hostile to the State are to be checked by the strongest measures. With Communist terrorism and raids there must be no trifling, and, when necessary, revolvers must be used without regard to consequences. Police officers who fire their revolvers in the execution of their duty, will be protected by me without regard to the consequences of using their weapons. But officers who fail out of mistaken regard for consequences must expect disciplinary action to be taken against them. . . ." Shoot and kill were the instructions or take the consequences in dismissal.

Inevitably Hitler, together with the other Nationalist Party, received a majority. And yet these terror elections, based upon the suppression of the workers' Press, the intimidation of the electorate by the Brownshirts, the beating up of Socialists and Communists, etc., were greeted by the Social Democratic leaders as a democratic mandate for Hitler. Writing in the party bulletin issued immediately after the elections Herr Stampfer, the editor of *Vorwärts* declared: "The victory of the Government parties makes it possible to govern strictly in accordance with the Constitution. They have only to act as a legal Government and it will follow naturally that we shall be in a legal opposition . . . if they choose to use their majority for measures that remain within the framework of the Constitution, we shall confine ourselves to the rôle of fair critics." By such means the Social Democratic leaders attempted to indicate their willingness to co-operate with the Fascists. In fact, on May 17th the whole Social Democratic Party in the Reichstag voted for the Nazi Government. They did not escape, however. Their property was confiscated and their organisation was declared illegal. Some of them were admitted to the ranks of the Nazis.

Others, in spite of their protestations of devotion for Hitler, were thrown into prison. "The Leiparts and the Grasmans may profess their devotion to Hitler," was the contemptuous declaration of Dr. Ley, leader of the Nazi Labour Front, "but they are better in prison."

The success of Fascism in Germany was the culmination of a period of defeats and frustrations which the revolutionary upsurges of the masses had suffered. "The experience of Germany from 1918 to 1933 is the classic demonstrations before the international working class of how a working-class revolution can be destroyed and squandered and brought to the deepest abyss of working-class subjection" (Dutt).

Fascism is thus the penalty which the workers suffer for disunity and indecisive leadership. No one would deny that many of the Social Democratic leaders were sincere and well-meaning individuals. But they could not, or would not, shake themselves free from the illusions bred during the period of capitalist expansion. They dreamed of an unending, ever upward movement to Socialism, while capitalism was all but tumbling about their ears. The most charitable thing that can be said about the Social Democratic leaders is that they were politically wrongly orientated, because they had not grasped the essential character of capitalist development. They had not understood that the road to Socialism lay through unceasing class struggle. They had failed to grasp the twin facts of capitalist decay and increasing severity of class struggle. Like the Italian Social Democrats, after the defeat, the light of their errors begins to filter through to their understanding. Thus in January 1934 the executive manifesto of German Social Democracy read: "The political transformation of 1918 ended up in a counter-revolutionary development. . . . The Social Democratic Party . . . took over control of the State without opposition, sharing it as a matter of course with the bourgeois parties, the old bureaucracy, and even with the reorganised military forces. That it should have taken over the old machinery

of government virtually unchanged was the great historical error committed by a German Labour movement which had lost its sense of direction during the war."

Thus the mistake of 1918 which prepared the ground for the Fascist triumph of 1933 is acknowledged. It was a mistake for which the working class paid dearly in blood and misery. Is it too much to hope that the price paid by the German workers will prevent the folly of working-class disunity and weak leadership being repeated elsewhere?

CHAPTER V

THE CORPORATE STATE

FASCISM IS NOT a new economic or social system. It is a method or rule adopted by the capitalists in circumstances of extreme economic decay and growing anti-capitalist feeling. The basic features of capitalism—the private ownership of the means of production; production for profit; the existence of a propertyless mass of people dependent upon an owning class for a living—these continue to exist in Fascist countries.

The Fascist leaders have been careful to assure the capitalists of their respect for private enterprise. The Italian Labour Charter declares that "The Corporate State considers that in the sphere of production private enterprise is the most effective and useful instrument in the interests of the nation". In a letter addressed to business men, Sir Oswald Mosley earnestly assured them that "In the corporate state you will be left in possession of your business".¹

The Fascists claim, however, to have an important social contribution to make in the construction of the "corporate state". This, says Sir Oswald Mosley, is the "main object of a modern and Fascist movement". Let us examine this claim of the Fascists.

The purpose of the corporate state is to unite syndicates of employers and workers into corporations. The corporations, according to Article 44 of the Italian Charter of Labour, have the following functions:

- "(1) To conciliate the controversies which may arise between the organisations co-ordinated.
- "(2) To promote, encourage and sustain all measures intended to co-ordinate production and improve its organisations.

¹ Fascist Week, Jan. 19th, 1934.

- "(3) To establish employment agencies wherever their need is evident; where such offices may be established, a royal decree may prohibit independent mediation and the operation of other employment agencies.
- "(4) To regulate training and apprenticeship, drawing up the general norms necessary to this end and to see that they are enforced. Such norms are to be applied to all collective labour contracts."

Such are the purposes of the corporations. Before discussing their implications, however, it is as well to show that, outside the imagination of Mussolini, they have little existence in fact. As recently as 1934, a professor in the Law School of the University of Rome, Signor Panunzio, wrote: "The truth is that from the day when the corporations were first mentioned in Italy down to the present, no one has ever conceived of them as flesh and blood institutions. Only the corporations instituted by the latest law stand out clearly as to nature and function. If the corporations had ever really existed, it would not have been necessary literally to drag them into life in 1934. The truth is that even to-day they exist only as an aspiration."¹

The Milan correspondent of *The Times* also referred to the non-existence of the much-vaunted corporations. He wrote: "Much is heard of the Corporative State. The Ministry of Corporations are created, and there are the National Councils of Corporations, the Corporative Central Committee, and so on; but so far, the Corporations, that is the organs which must apply the principle on which the whole reform is based, have not appeared."² In other words, everything existed but the corporations.

The interests of the outside world in the non-existence of the corporations, the many questions being asked, stimulated Mussolini to "create" them. Hurriedly in January 1934 a bill was ushered into the Italian Senate

¹ See Professor Salvemini, *Under the Axe of Fascism*, p. 147. (Gollancz.)

² *The Times*, Nov. 28th, 1933.

establishing the corporations. In his speech introducing the bill, Mussolini gave every assurance to the Italian capitalists that the sacred rights of private property would not be disturbed. "The corporative economy respects the principle of private property. Private property completes the human personality. It is a right. But it is also a duty. We think that property ought to be regarded as a social function; we wish therefore to encourage, not passive property, but active property, which does not confine itself to enjoying wealth, but develops it and increases it. The corporative economy respects private initiative. The Charter of Labour expressly states that only when private initiative is unintelligent, non-existent, or inefficient may the State intervene. We shall proceed with great caution and not try to rush things. We are sure of ourselves, because our revolution has a whole century before it."¹

In such terms were the corporations established. There was no need for alarm. "Our revolution has a whole century before it." So much for the reality of the corporations.

Let us now examine the implications of the *theory* of the corporate state. This is stated by Sir Oswald Mosley as follows:

"Our policy is the establishment of the Corporate State. As the name implies, this means a State organised like the human body. Every member of that body acts in harmony with the purpose of the whole under the guidance and driving brain of the Fascist Government. This does not mean that industry will be conducted or interfered with from Whitehall, as in Socialist organisation. But it does mean that the limits within which interests may operate will be laid down by Government, and that those limits will be the welfare of the nation as a whole. To that interest of the nation as a whole, all lesser interests are subordinate, whether of Right or of Left, whether they be employers' federation, trade union, banking or professional interests. Class war will give place to national

¹ Professor Salvemini, *Under the Axe of Fascism*, pp. 134-5.

co-operation. All who pursue a sectional and anti-national policy will be opposed by the might of the organised State. *Profit can be made provided that the activity enriches the nation as well as the individual.* . . ."¹

The main emphasis in the above is upon the priority of "national" interests. It is, however, an old trick of the capitalists to present their *own* interests as the interests of the nation as a whole. Thus when their private investments, their foreign possessions are in danger, they proclaim that the "national" interests are menaced. In the Great War, for example, the "national honour" was said to be at stake, when what was really at stake was the supremacy of British capitalism in the markets of the world. The General Strike of 1926 was likewise described as a threat against the "nation"; the miners, it was declared, were holding a pistol at the "nation's" head. This, notwithstanding the fact that the workers form by far the greater part of the nation.

In short, the "national interests" and the interests of the capitalist class are, for that class, identical. That this is so we can see by a consideration of the statement in Mosley's definition of the corporate state that "profit can be made provided that the activity enriches the nation as well as the individual". Is this anything other than a tautological deceit which asserts that the capitalist can make profit so long as it is—profitable? For if the "activity" no longer "enriches" him, then clearly it will not enable him to employ workers and thus to "enrich" them with wages. The condition that profit can only be made provided that the nation as a whole is enriched, is thus a meaningless proviso. It is the threadbare justification for profit-making that capitalists have always advanced; that in the process of making a profit, employment is created, goods and services produced. Such a justification permits the capitalists to cease production, to throw men out of work, when profits disappear. And so long as the motive of production is profit, corporate state or no

¹ Oswald Mosley, *Fascism in Britain*. (My italics.)

corporate state, the private profit of the capitalists, rather than the national welfare, will determine production. If a sphere of production has been declared "unprofitable" by a capitalist, then for the corporate state to compel the continuance of production in that sphere would merely be to bankrupt the capitalist. On the other hand, if a sphere of production is already profitable, then it would need no advice from the corporate state to induce capitalists to engage in production. The attraction of profits would be sufficient inducement. So long, therefore, as private enterprise and production for profit are the characteristics of an economic system, the interests of the nation are subordinate to the ability of the owners of industry to make their profits.

The corporate state, further, envisages means by which federations of employers and workers' organisations can come together in consultation, to reach agreement about wages, hours and conditions of employment, generally. Such joint discussions are already familiar facts in England. They possess, however, one distinctive feature within the corporate state, which exposes the real purpose of this State. *They are based upon the destruction of the rights of the workers to strike.*

It is true that the corporate state is declared to be impartial as between the claims of the employers and the claims of the workers. In other words, not only are strikes forbidden but lock-outs are forbidden also. The sham nature of this equality is exposed in the following remarks of Professor Salvemini: "Strikes are forbidden by law and punished by a rising scale of penalties according to whether they are economic or sympathetic, and whether they take place in privately owned or in public enterprises, the maximum penalty being seven years' imprisonment for a strike aimed at bringing pressure to bear upon the public authorities. Lock-outs are forbidden as well as strikes. This is supposed to be a proof that equality reigns between capital and labour. But since the workers cannot strike, the employers have no need of recourse to the lock-out.

If an employer declares that he can no longer maintain the existing volume of employment in his concern, the stoppage of work is then not a 'lock-out', but a 'closing-down' induced by a 'justified motive'.¹ To this Salvemini adds a footnote quoted from *Lavoro d'Italia*, September 3rd, 1929: "It is well known that the employers can reduce the number of employees or of working hours without closing their factories and producing a lock-out."

Now let us see how the compulsory arbitration which takes the place of strikes is heavily weighted against the workers.

In Italy the representatives of the employers meet the representatives of the workers. The employers' representatives are chosen by the employers. But the representatives of the workers are *appointed officials of the Fascist trade unions*. These unions are completely under the thumb of the Fascists. They have no independent existence. They are disciplinary frames for the mass. "The Fascist unions," Mussolini has declared, "form a great mass completely under the control of Fascism and the Government; *a mass that obeys.*"

Is it any wonder that Dr. Einzig, a warm admirer of Italian Fascism, is moved to exclaim with naïve satisfaction that "in no country was it so easy as in Italy to obtain the consent of employees to a reduction of wages."²

The corporate state, in a word, is a device to deprive the workers of the liberty to protest against attacks on their conditions. It reduces them to the status of serfs, unable to defend themselves, at the mercy of the employers and the State. This is the reality behind the high-sounding phrases of "national interests", "enriching the nation", etc. Capitalism, in decline, requires a passive working class, which, unresistingly, will accommodate itself to the fact of this decline. By smashing the workers' organisations, by converting their trade unions into "disciplinary frames", by pursuing the revolutionary

¹ G. Salvemini, *Under the Axe of Fascism*, p. 88.

² P. Einzig, *Economic Foundations of Fascism*, p. 31.

workers with terror, the Fascists seek to assure the passivity of the workers. The corporate state "*is capitalism just as we know it to-day, with all its instabilities, its crises, its misery and its decay, plus a form of serfdom for the workers imposed by compulsory arbitration and the denial of the workers' right to withdraw his labour. Everything else is a pure bluff!*"¹

There is no exaggeration in this statement. Has the corporate state enabled Italy to weather the economic crisis of capitalism to any better effect than other capitalist countries? On the contrary. The crisis began earlier in Italy and was more severe than elsewhere. The report of the British commercial attachés in Rome issued in 1929 states: "The year 1927 (two years before the crisis was felt in other countries) was one of crisis for almost all industries. . . . Trade statistics for 1928 do not appear quite so satisfactory as those for 1927. . . ." The *New Republic* of May 16th, 1934, an authoritative American journal, states: "The crisis in Italy lasted eight years, as against four in other countries." The Italian parliamentary committee on the estimate for the financial year 1932-3 stated in April 1932: "It is necessary to face the hard reality—that for Italy too the crisis has become more serious, more widespread and more cruel. The situation is much worse than we faced twelve months ago. . . ."

The corporate state did not save Italy from crisis because capitalism, private ownership of the means of production, production for profit, rules in Italy. There is no new system in Italy, merely a decaying, desperate capitalist system seeking to prop itself up by the most vicious attacks on the standards of the workers, reducing the workers to economic serfdom in order to do so. The corporate state is pure bluff; the alleged concern for "national" interests rather than the interests of any section of the nation, is an insolent pretence.

Such is the corporate state in Italy.

When we turn to Germany we find the same picture. The purpose of the corporate organisation there has been

¹ John Strachey, *The Menace of Fascism*, p. 97.

defined by Dr. Ley, chief of the German Labour Front, as follows: "Our corporate organisation will as its first work restore absolute leadership to the natural leader of the factory, that is, the employer, and will at the same time place full responsibility on him. *Only the employer can decide.*"¹

The workers, in short, were to have no say in their conditions of employment. The employer was to be absolute in his decisions. This followed naturally from the announcement in the leading Nazi newspaper, *Völkischer Beobachter*, following the March elections of 1933, that the Storm Troops had occupied all trade union buildings and fifty trade union leaders had been arrested.

The same paper defined the rôle of the Nazi State in respect of industry. "The State is guarding the factories in the interest of national economy through its guardians who have to be assisted by the authorities and the police. Whoever disturbs the peace of the factories will feel the arm of the law." Then follows the hypocritical pretence of impartiality which we have already noticed in regard to the Italian corporate state. "Strikes or lock-outs will be prevented in every instance by the guardians, as they are only harmful to industry."²

One of the first services which the Nazis rendered the capitalists when they assumed power was to deprive the workers of their rights within the Works Councils. These Councils had been means of protecting the interests of the workers and had always been regarded with hostility by the employers. They had made the reduction of wages and the lengthening of hours a far from smooth process for the employers. For this reason, the Nazis turned their attention to the Works Councils quite early. Their decision regarding them was expressed as follows:

"Unfortunately the Works Councils have until now often only represented the one-sided interests of the workers, contrary to the regulations of the law concerning

¹ Dr. Ley, *Fundamental Ideas on Corporate Organisation*.

² *Völkischer Beobachter*, July 14th, 1933.

Works Councils. 'This was due to the fact that the workers and the office employees only were represented in them. In future the employer, the bearer of the economic risk, will be the deciding factor in the Works Councils in compliance with the Leader principle.'¹

"The employer . . . will be the deciding factor", this constantly recurring phrase sums up the meaning of the corporate state and lies behind all the talk of national interests in which the proponents of the corporate state indulge.

To sum up. Italy and Germany have taught us what Fascism does when it comes to power. It harries the revolutionary workers with terror. It deprives the workers of their rights of organisation and struggle. It not only leaves the capitalists in complete possession of the means of production; it uses the whole weight of the Fascist State to safeguard the capitalists' interests under the pretext of safeguarding the interests of the "nation".

Let us close this chapter with some recent figures concerning the mortality rate in Germany, which provide a grim commentary on the zeal with which the Fascist State safeguards the "national interests".

According to the *Deutsche Aetzteblatt* there was, between 1932 and 1936, an increase of 10 per cent in the mortality rate for the population as a whole. But for that part of the population covered by public health insurance schemes, namely the working part of the population, the deaths per thousand rose by 32 per cent. The *New Statesman and Nation*, commenting on these figures, aptly summed up the situation in the following words.

"In a country whose government has voted for guns instead of butter, the well-to-do suffer no loss of longevity; but the working classes, which National Socialism was to elevate, provide death, even in peace-time, with a richer and richer harvest."²

¹ *Deutsche Bergwerks Zeitung*, Dec. 10th, 1933.

² *New Statesman and Nation*, Feb. 6th, 1937.

CHAPTER VI

FASCIST TENDENCIES IN BRITAIN

THE PURPOSE OF these preliminary chapters, we have already stated, is to give an economic and political background against which can be described the workings of those psychological factors which aid the spread of Fascist propaganda. It must not be thought, however, that in so briefly reviewing the economic and political forces impelling the ruling class towards Fascism, we overlook their primacy. Fascism is primarily a political phenomenon bound up with the decay of capitalism. But it wins widespread support amongst those whose real interests it is to destroy capitalism, by playing on certain psychological factors. Our main purpose, in this book, is to enquire into the nature of these factors. But before we turn to this task, let us glance at the prospects of Fascism in Britain.

Is Fascism a danger here? Since the Fascist Party is still a negligible force in this country, is it really worth discussing Fascism?

In the first place, how does one assess the danger of Fascism? It is not sufficient to weigh up the prospects of the party or parties styling themselves Fascist. For the actual support which such parties have at any moment is no reliable guide to the tendencies towards Fascism in the ruling class. Indeed, to centre one's attention solely on an existing Fascist Party in order to estimate the danger of Fascism, is folly. For the capitalist class can, almost overnight, take any such Fascist party, pump into it huge subsidies, give it extensive liberty of action, protect it with the police and lawcourts, enable it to conduct a tremendous propaganda campaign, and raise its influence from an almost negligible quantity to enormous heights. This happened in Italy and Germany. In Germany, we

saw the votes for the Fascists soared from 800,000 to 6,000,000 in two years.

At the point where its influence was lowest was Fascism a danger in Germany? Of course it was, but its danger lay in the tendencies and direction of ruling-class politics, rather than the numerical influence of the Hitler party. To assess the danger of Fascism in Great Britain, therefore, we must not be blinded by the lack of mass support which the Fascists possess in this country. We must assess this danger in terms of the political tendencies of the British ruling-class.

The formation of the National Government marked a definite step away from democratic forms of rule. It took place when the Labour Government had become heavily discredited. The Labour Party, basing itself upon the belief in a peaceful, gradual and progressive improvement in the conditions of the workers, within the framework of capitalism, was confronted with the growth of unemployment, constant attacks on the workers' wages, and the demand for huge economies at the expense of the unemployed, civil servants, etc.

It found itself powerless to stem these attacks; they were in complete contradiction to its political outlook; it fled panic-stricken from the problems involved. Faced with the growing disillusionment of the workers and the danger of it taking a revolutionary direction, the capitalist class acted quickly. Differences between sections of the capitalist class were buried, members of all capitalist political parties joined together in one tremendous attempt to save capitalism from its political crisis. By playing on the deep disgust which the masses felt for the Labour Government the capitalists succeeded in winning the masses for its National, coalition government. Once installed in power, the National Government began to transform democracy from within. It began to concentrate power in the hands of the Cabinet, ruling by administrative acts and Orders in Council. Thus the economy measures were put through by Orders in Council, and only submitted to Parliament when they were already in operation.

The police force was reorganised and used increasingly against the workers' demonstrations. Restrictions on meetings, particularly those outside the unemployment exchanges, were imposed. A precedent for arrest and imprisonment without any specific overt offence being committed was established when Tom Mann was imprisoned. The number of arrests on political issues increased. The Incitement to Disaffection Bill was passed which gave the police greatly increased powers of search and confiscation.

These are indications that ruling-class policy is turning more and more in the direction of dictatorial methods of Government. The admiration of the National Government for dictatorial methods was expressed by the late Ramsay MacDonald in a speech to the National Labour Committee on November 6th, 1933: He said: "The secret of the success of dictatorships is that they have managed somehow or other to make the soul of a nation alive. We may be shocked at what they are doing, but they have certainly awakened something in the hearts of their people which has given them a new vision and a new energy to pursue national affairs. In this country the three parties in co-operation are doing that, and our task must be to get the young with imagination, hope and vision behind us."

The love for dictatorship and the distaste for democracy have been clearly shown in the attitude of the National Government in regard to Spain. There, a constitutionally elected democratic government had asked for the usual rights accorded a government faced with a revolt, namely the right to purchase arms with which to quell the revolt. The National Government used its influence to prevent France from sending arms as well as refusing to do so itself. It is not interested in the preservation of democracy. Its sympathies are with the Fascist powers because it, itself, is tending towards Fascism.

This attitude of the National Government towards Spain more than anything else should convince us of the

Fascist tendencies of the British ruling class. It does show, as many people think, a weak and indecisive government unable to see the threat which German and Italian ascendancy in the Mediterranean means. It shows that the ruling class of this country is deeply conscious of its class interests and is fully prepared to run imperial wars in order to safeguard international capitalism. For it knows that if democracy triumphs in Spain, then a tremendous fillip will be given to the progressive forces all over the world, in France, in England, and in those countries where they have been driven underground, in the open European countries. Such an impetus to the progressive, democratic forces is a serious obstacle in the road of a capitalist class seeking to compel its workers to adapt themselves to the lower level of life demanded by a capitalism in decay.

The National Government, therefore, is the thin end of the wedge of Fascism. It indicates the tendencies of the capitalist class politics in this country and must be considered as a warning that Fascism is a grave danger here.

Thus the National Government is a political reflection of the economic decay of British capitalism. The danger of Fascism is bound up with this fact of economic decline. Unless we see the relation between economic decline and the repudiation of democracy and therefore a tendency towards Fascism, our estimates of the danger of Fascism will be all at sea. The German Social Democrats failed to grasp this relation. The consequence was that they were lulled into a feeling of false security when Hindenburg defeated Hitler as President and told themselves that Brüning was a lesser evil to Hitler. They told themselves that von Papen and then Schleicher was a lesser evil. And because they had these illusions they succumbed without a struggle to Fascism when it came. If, on the other hand, they had understood, that Brüning, Papen and Schleicher were indications of definite Fascist tendencies in the ruling class, they would have prepared together with the Communist parties. If they had understood the basic economic forces which impel the ruling

swap one political weapon and to take up another, could not have lived in their fool's paradise.

inability to see the danger of Fascism until Fascism is an accomplished fact is not confined to Germany. It is prominently among British Labour Party politicians to-day. They take an attitude towards the National Government which is almost precisely the attitude taken by the Social Democrats towards the Brüning Government. With their eyes on Mosley and unable to see the forces which impel the British ruling class towards Fascism, they

claim that Fascism is not to be a danger, because Mosley has not sufficient influence. On the grounds that the danger of Fascism is exaggerated they reject the proposition of a popular front. This attitude is expressed in these words of Dalton: "I do not believe that Fascism is to-day an actual menace in this country. If it were, or if it should become so to-morrow, we should need to examine, in the new circumstances, the project of a popular front."¹

In other words, when Fascism has arrived in its complete form the Labour leaders will deign to recognise it. Present forces in the National Government, the general economic decline of capitalism, the inevitability of a slump succeeding the present "boom", these constitute in the opinion of the Labour leaders, no serious danger.

The same fatalistic path is being trod as was followed in Italy and Germany. This attitude proceeds from a rejection of the Marxist analysis of capitalist economic forces and a forlorn clinging to the illusions of an eternal boom, via a prosperous capitalism, to Socialism.

The Labour Party must not be allowed to take this disasteful attitude. If it wishes to preserve democracy it must be prepared to face a bitter struggle with the forces of reaction. The preservation of democracy in the face of a reaction which seeks to abolish it as a preliminary to rolling down the workers' standards, is a task requiring united strength of the workers' movement. Is there any danger of Fascism in this country? The answer is that

¹ *Political Quarterly*, Oct.-Dec. 1936.

the gravest danger lies in the official Labour Party's refusal to build unity now, before Fascism obtains full power.

What of the Fascist Party in this country? It would be a mistake to underestimate its possibilities merely because it has yet to win a large mass following. Indeed, it is tactically a wise step for the capitalist class not to give the Fascist Party too great support until it is more or less ready to make open use of it. For then those individuals who think of Fascism solely in terms of the size of this or that Fascist party are misled into thinking that there is small danger of Fascism. This superficial viewpoint we have already discussed. The question we must answer is does the Fascist body in this country, the British Union of Fascists, present those features which make it a suitable weapon for the ruling class when it is necessary for that class to move over to open dictatorship? The size or influence of the party at the moment is not of great importance, for, as we have seen, by means of huge subsidies and elaborate propaganda campaigns, protection from the police, etc., it can be swollen almost overnight.

The British Union of Fascists already receives large subsidies from sources outside the party. Lord Feversham stated in the House of Lords on February 28th, 1934, in reply to a question on the B.U.F.: "The exact source from which income was derived to finance these activities was unknown, but it was obvious that substantial financial backing was forthcoming from various sources other than that of the private wealth of the leader and the dues or subscriptions from members." The fact, also, that the British Union of Fascists has announced its intentions to run 400 candidates at the next general election, must give food for thought. For there are obvious financial implications involved when a party which, as yet, has run no candidates, decides to run 400.

Mosley also has developed a technique of demagoguery which closely matches the technique of Hitler and Mussolini. One of his political opponents, who has small love for

Mosley, has said that Mosley "is the only politician with the exception of the Prime Minister who can attract large audiences. . . . 'Mosley is coming', the posters announce. That is all. But it is enough in a great many towns to fill the largest halls".¹ A large part of these audiences are undoubtedly anti-Fascist. But the objective of the demagogue is first of all to loom large in the public eye. This Mosley knows well how to do. Later on, he is confident, many anti-Fascists will turn to him as a final and desperate resort. And so they will if the working-class movement is disrupted and disorganised, presents no solid front and no determined leadership. These are the conditions upon which the Fascists gamble, which brought Mussolini and Hitler to power and may well do so for Mosley.

Mosley too knows how to play on disillusioned Labour elements. There are many ex-Labour men of some prominence in his ranks and they make good use of their experience in the working-class movement. Their appeals to Labour sympathies lack the crudity which marked their earlier efforts. They are clever enough now to identify themselves with the Labour Party of past years, its aspirations and struggles. Is not the following extract from the *Blackshirt* an excellent measure of their clever tactics? It is an appeal to the Labour Party and is headed "Forward from the Labour Party to National Socialism".

"The first thing which you Socialists—if I may address you directly—should bear in mind is that the British Union includes men from all the old parties, who find in its doctrines the most perfect expression of their old ideals. Those of us who were once members of the Labour Party are no exception to the rule. We are Fascists not because we find in Fascism less Socialism than in the Labour Programme but because we find more.

"Even before the last Labour Government came into power Mr. G. D. H. Cole described in *The Next Ten Years* the kind of programme which it should adopt. It is safe to say that, had the Labour Government followed Mr.

¹ Robert Bernays, M.P., *The Spectator*.

Cole's counsel, we should still be members of the Labour Party, and our leader as well!"¹

Such appeals may have little effect now. But they will have if the workers' disillusionment with the Labour Party is allowed to grow. The Fascist movement is preparing for such a time. What preparation is Labour making?

Nor must we allow ourselves to be deceived by the banning of the Fascist uniforms into thinking that Fascism has thereby ceased to be a danger. For under cover of this banning of Fascist uniforms the National Government has introduced fresh Fascist legislation against workers' demonstrations and their movements. In other words, the National Government, with remarkable cleverness, has turned the protests of the workers against Fascism into a means of imposing still further Fascist legislation on them. Formally, Fascism receives a set-back, actually it receives an impulse, in the sense that Fascism is a definite political tendency of the ruling class.

The banning of the Fascist uniforms, therefore, must not throw dust into our eyes as did the similar banning of the Nazi uniforms deceive many Social Democrats. Then, the banning almost preceded the coming into power of the Nazis. We must, instead, regard the British Union of Fascists as an organisation of capable demagogues, unscrupulous and ruthless, ready to hand for the capitalist class should occasion demand their use. Whether they will be used and whether the ruling class continues in its Fascist, reactionary tendencies depends upon the Labour movement. To combat Fascism we must enthuse the workers once more in the Labour movement, give them fresh hopes and a new vision, inspire them with the desire to fight. We must show them that the Labour movement is capable of presenting a solid, fighting front to the enemy and of giving decisive leadership upon all issues. For this we need the popular front of all progressive, democratic and revolutionary elements. Only thus can we ensure the defeat of Fascism.

¹ *Blackshirt*, Dec. 26th, 1936.

PART II

FASCISM AND THE EXPLOITATION
OF HUMAN NATURE

CHAPTER VII

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NATIONALISM

WE COME NOW to the main purpose of this book. In this, and the following chapters, we shall discuss those aspects of human nature which aid the spread of Fascist propaganda. In doing so we shall make considerable use of modern psychological theory.

We shall, first of all, consider the phenomenon of nationalism; for it is to the exploitation of national sentiments, above everything, that Fascist propaganda owes its strength.

In a moderate form, nationalism may be a pride in one's country evoked by contemplating the contributions which one's fellow-countrymen, past and present, have made to world culture. Thus Englishmen may feel proud of the England which gave birth to Shakespeare, Germans of Goethe's homeland, and so on. There are obvious psychological mechanisms involved here. The pride derives from a process of identification by which we share in the greatness of our fellow-countrymen. And it may be objected that it is therefore an irrational pride; for the achievements are not really ours, they do not really reflect glory upon us as individuals. None-the-less, such identifications can have considerable social value. They give an impulse to the individual to become like the admired person; not merely to congratulate oneself on having been born within the same geographical area, but to emulate, in some measure, his example. In consequence, we may say that the pride of country which springs from the pride in the cultural achievements of its great men and women, has much to be said for it.

But it is not this aspect of nationalism to which Fascist propaganda appeals. Not the cultural achievements of a country, but its military prowess is extolled by Fascist

nationalism. Indeed, Germany's cultural achievements are expressly repudiated by the Nazis. "We are not and do not want to be the land of Goethe and Einstein. Not on any account," declared a German newspaper.¹

The sense of pride which we mentioned above is distorted into a bombastic conceit which pictures one's own nation as having been divinely selected for God's special purposes. As one Fascist theorist expressed it: "The nation enjoys a direct and very deep unity with God. . . . Germany is the centre of the world, and the world cannot exist without Germany. Germany is the kingdom of God."²

The predominant feature of Fascist nationalism is its aggressiveness, its suspicion of other nations. This fact has been well summed up in the following characterisation of the nationalism encouraged in Italy. It is made by Signor Nitti, one-time Premier of Italy. This nationalism, he said, "is based upon suspicion of other peoples and on a programme of force and exaltation of war. It is not love of one's country but rather hatred of other countries".

Let us consider a few examples of this Fascist nationalism in order to envisage clearly the type of phenomenon with which we have to deal. Its ambition has been completely expressed in the war-like pronouncement of Mussolini. "We must be ready at a moment's notice to mobilise five million men and be able to arm them; we must strengthen our navy and also our aviation, in which I believe more and more, and which must be so numerous and so powerful that the roar of its motors can drown every other noise on the peninsula, and the surface of its wings hide the sun from our land."

Again, following the army manoeuvres of August 1934, Mussolini declared: "We are becoming and we shall always approach nearer to being a military nation. Since we are not afraid of words let us add: militarist. To complete the matter; war-like, that is endowed more and more with the

¹ *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, May 7th, 1933.

² Franz Schanwecher.

virtues of obedience, sacrifice, and devotion to the Fatherland."

The horrors of the Great War showed what depths of human depravity can be stirred by this type of propaganda. And now, nearly twenty years after the end of the war, the frenzy of this nationalism seems to be capturing the minds of millions once more. In Fascist countries, the people are being fed on hate propaganda, are being duped with ludicrous stories of national destiny. War is presented as an ennobling activity. To die on the battlefield, the highest ambition of men. "There is no better death in the world," declared von Papen, "than to be slain by the enemy."

As in Italy so in Germany, this militarist spirit is being developed. *The Times* of October 31st, 1933, reported a speech by the Nazi youth leader, in which he grew lyrical over the sublimity of bloodshed. The occasion of the speech was the unveiling of a war-memorial in the shape of a statue of the Angel of Death, the angel Michael. . . . "Our words," he cried, "are spoken in the face of the awful summons to war. Youths, your hands are now raised in an oath before this monument which is erected to the sublimity of bloodshed—and Michael is the Angel of Death—and you are swearing that your lives belong to the Reich and your blood to the Leader."

Perhaps the most fanatical glorifications of this spirit of blood and conquest are contained in Hitler's political testament, *Mein Kampf*. This is a book which every school-child is expected to read in Germany. The following extracts are typical of its contents:

"Not until the Germans have realised that they must engage in an active and final conflict with France with the most comprehensive intentions, will it be possible to bring the fruitless struggle to a conclusion; that is if Germany really sees in the extermination of France a means of providing her people with the necessary room for expansion. There are eighty million Germans in Europe to-day. Our policy will be recognised as the correct one when in

less than one hundred years from now the continent Europe is inhabited by 250,000,000 Germans."¹

"... suppressed provinces are not led back into the lap of an empire by flaming protests, but through a well sharpened sword. To forge this sword is the object of people's domestic policy; to see that the forging is done and to seek allies in arms is the object of its foreign policy."²

"We National Socialists must unchangeably keep to one foreign political aim, namely to secure for our German people their proper land and soil on this earth. And this action is the only one which justifies the stake of blood before God and our German posterity. Just as our forefathers had to fight with their lives for the soil on which we live to-day, so also, in the future, life will not allot to our people soil as a national favour, but only through the power of a victorious sword."³

"The question of the recuperation of the German power is . . . how can we create the *spirit* which renders a people capable of carrying arms? When this spirit dominates a people, will-power finds a thousand ways, each of which leads to a weapon."⁴

These quotations give some idea of the kind of national outlook which Fascism seeks to create. Is it not important to enquire into the psychological roots of this type nationalist propaganda? It seems to evoke a response from something deep in human nature. It seems to convert the mildest and most peace-loving individuals into hate consumed, bloodthirsty maniacs. Lying stories about foreigners, ludicrous deceptions about national destiny, extollations of the virtues of war and death; these are the methods by which Fascist propaganda seeks to stir the emotional depths of the people.

The neglect to consider the nature of these emotional factors by Socialists and Communists can have disastrous results.

¹ p. 766, 1933 edition.

² *ibid.*, p. 689.

³ *ibid.*, pp. 739-41.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 365.

In Germany, for example, it contributed to the failure of the German Communists to win, in time, a decisive victory of the German working class. This is fully admitted by Dimitroff, the secretary of the Communist International. Of the Communists, he says, "for a long time failed to reckon with the wounded national sentiments and indignation of the masses at the Versailles Treaty".¹

Why was this? It was due to the belief of the German Communists that nationalism could have no meaning for the oppressed proletariat. But it turned out, as Dimitroff admitted, that nationalism had a very important meaning for the German masses. Clearly, we cannot explain this group in terms of economic interests. The love and loyalty of country on the part of those who have no stake in the privileges, point to the existence of emotional factors in the make-up of our fellow-men which must be understood if we are to prevent their unscrupulous exploitation by the Fascists. Moreover, it is only by taking these factors into account that we can effectively get in touch with our fellow-men. Otherwise we are apt to ignore the emotional needs which lie behind the adult's behaviour. We should take these important emotional factors in the make-up of our fellow-men into account in our propaganda and seek to give them an expression which conforms with social progress.

Thus, then, enquire into the psychological basis of nationalism.

Modern psychological theory shows that there is a close relationship between the attitudes, sentiments and beliefs of adult life and the emotional environment of childhood. A child's loves and hates, his fears, hopes and anxieties, to an extent hitherto unsuspected, the prototypes of later, adult attitudes. The early experiences of the child leave an impression on his mind which often persists throughout life. They may be long forgotten but this does not mean that they no longer exist. They exist *unconsciously*, exert their influence on the adult's behaviour with-

¹ *The Working Class Against Fascism*, Modern Books.

out his least awareness of their unconscious existence. This is the reason why so much of human behaviour defies explanation in terms of rational, conscious motives. The motives derive from unconscious, emotional needs, unsatisfied in childhood and seeking satisfaction in adult life, in the various activities of the adult. By revealing these unconscious emotional factors, we can understand much that is otherwise inexplicable.

To understand the psychological meaning of nationalism, we must, therefore, seek for its roots in the earliest emotional relationships of childhood. Let us, then, briefly describe the early situations in which the child's emotions of love and hate develop, in order to discover if there is some relationship between these situations and the adult sentiments of nationalism which Fascist propaganda seeks to exploit.

Among the early relationships of family life, of primary importance is the intimate bond existing between the child and its mother. For the mother, by virtue of her special biological functions, is the first person to whom the child directs his impulse to love. As she feeds him and attends to his bodily wants, she surrounds him with a protective atmosphere of love and tenderness. Hence, it is not difficult to understand that it is to the mother that the child turns in order to express his first love longings.

But while the child demands all the love of the mother for himself, she, of course, is not able to devote her whole time to him. She has other duties involved in running her home, perhaps she has other children who also require her love and care, and, lastly, she has her husband. In other words, the attention which the mother must give to other matters and other people, tend to leave some of the love of the small child unsatisfied. He, of course, does not appreciate that the getting of food and clothing is a serious business, for working women a worrying business, which must deprive him, to some extent, of his mother's attentions. Nor is he able to contemplate, with unselfish

calm, the love which his mother shows for her other children and her husband. This is not to be expected, for the self-denial involved requires a degree of understanding which he has as yet not attained. Many parents have attested to the outbursts of resentment and jealousy which newborn babies provoke in the elder children. Parents have recounted how displays of affection between themselves have aroused the anger and jealousy of their young children. These things are more or less familiar facts and to many people are merely entertaining childish peculiarities. But, in fact, they evidence important emotional conditions which have a far-reaching effect in later life. For they mean that childhood inevitably gives rise to a fund of unsatisfied love in the child, on the one hand, and a sense of frustration and disappointment, on the other.

The first point to notice, then, is that family life unavoidably gives rise to a fund of unsatisfied love in the child. But this, in turn, stimulates feelings of hostility and hatred. These feelings naturally turn towards whoever has the ability to compel the child to refrain from this or that activity. The hand which can take away the knife with which he was playing, the voice which can forbid him meddling with the radio and which, brooking no opposition, announces his bed-time all too soon, belong to an authority before which the child feels helpless and inferior. And because authority in the family generally rests, in the last resort, with the father, the child's hostility tends to become directed to him.

But again this impulse must remain unsatisfied. For, not only is the parent more powerful than the child, but the child also loves his father. The father appears to the childish mind as a being, strong and wise, who casts a protective influence over him, and to whom he can turn when perplexed. The child wants to be like his father, he identifies himself mentally with his father. He cannot, therefore, express his hostility towards him without disturbing his feelings of love.

This contradictory attitude in the child may best be understood if we regard it as directed towards the mother as well as the father. For the authority which forbids the child following his bent comes, though to a lesser extent, from the mother also. Is it difficult to believe that, in the moment when his mother has rebuked him for some action, or turned her attention from him to her housework, the child is filled with anger and resentment? Let us remember that these occasions must be many in the life of the average child. Let us also remember how much more difficult it is for the child to find an outlet for this anger and resentment than it is for an adult. For the child, a display of tantrums often brings additional punishment, some further deprivation, the sending to bed earlier, etc. So the child must bottle up, must *repress* these hostile feelings by virtue of its very weakness. And, as we have already noted, they conflict with his deep love for his parents. Here, then, is the situation which develops, to a greater or lesser extent, for every child. His love for his parents cannot be wholly satisfied because the latter have to share their love between themselves and perhaps with other children, as well as with him. Further, the everyday duties and occupations of the parents compel them to withdraw attention from him to other things. This gives rise to unsatisfied love. In turn, this unsatisfied love stimulates hostile and hate impulses towards the parents which, however, because of the weakness of the child and his need for the parents' love and protection, are likewise destined to remain unsatisfied.

These are the two main facts which will help us to understand the psychology of nationalism. We mentioned above that there is a close relationship between later-day emotional attitudes and these earlier unsatisfied impulses. To a great extent, later day emotional attitudes are *symbolic* means of satisfying these earlier impulses. In other words, the adult lavishes his unsatisfied love and hate on objects and persons which are substitutes for the

objects and persons of childhood.¹ In this light we can see that nationalism performs an important symbolical rôle. For there is a striking symbolical parallel between the adult's attitude towards his native land, and his early childhood relationships to his parents. This is illustrated in the use of the terms *motherland* and *fatherland*. Towards the land in which he was born, the individual feels the attitude which he first felt towards the mother who bore him. His motherland nourishes and sustains him in the same way as did his own mother. Towards his native land, therefore, the individual directs the unsatisfied love and affection which were denied outlet during childhood. This symbolic representation of the mother by the country of one's birth receives vivid form in many turns of speech. Thus, one hears reference to the country which bore one, rather than to the country in which one was born. And the threat of enemy invasion is referred to as a threat of violation of the motherland. Nor are these mere metaphorical representations. For they have a significance to the individual sufficiently powerful to lead him to expose himself to risk of life and

¹ In childhood, these unsatisfied impulses gain a measure of satisfaction in a number of ways. Thus a familiar example of a symbolic satisfaction of repressed hostility towards the father is the delight which children take in stories in which the wicked giant is finally slain by the diminutive hero. Here, clearly, the giant is the father who has thwarted and stood in the way of the child, while the brave little fellow who triumphs over the giant, is the child himself. Similarly, the child may dream of his father taking a journey, going a long way, etc., as a substitute symbol for the death of his father. Freud's works teem with examples of this kind, and the interested reader may derive considerable and well-attested information from such books as the *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis* and *Dream Interpretation*.

Another interesting example of symbolic gratification of hate impulses is given by A. S. Neil. Neil, who runs a school for "difficult" children, relates that the following verse is extremely popular with the children:

"Tommy saw his house on fire,
His mother in the flames expire,
His father killed by falling brick,
And Tommy laughed—till he was sick."

They laugh very loudly, says Neil, "because of their repressed hate for their parents, hate made by spankings, or criticism or punishment". (A. S. Neil, *The Problem Child*, p. 75.)

limb in the defence of the integrity of his motherland. And no man could do more to rescue his mother from the threat of violation. Indeed, in wartime, when passions run high, and normal everyday inhibitions are swept aside, this threat is actually used by the propagandists of the Government to recruit men. They directly affirm what is normally hinted at symbolically, that the enemy invaders will brutally violate all the women-folk. The defence of the motherland becomes for millions of people, the defence of mothers and sisters from a horrible fate at the hands of the enemy.

This impulse to rescue one's native land from the threat of enemy aggression is a means, therefore, of expressing one's unsatisfied love for one's mother. For, in saving one's country from the aggression of enemy forces, one is symbolically saving one's mother from death, or giving her life—in a word, loving her. We see, then, what deep and urgent impulses lie behind the ferocity which is provoked by the menace of enemy invasion. Clever propaganda has only to spread alarms about the dangers of such invasion to arouse those infantile desires to love and protect the mother. But not only does nationalism give an expression to unsatisfied love for the mother. It also affords expression to the unsatisfied hate which children develop towards the authority to which they ascribe the deprivations of their love. This authority, we saw, was mainly the father. The father had the first claim on the mother's love and affection. It was his prohibitions which made the child feel so helpless and inferior. For then the child had small chance of getting even with his father. But, as we have seen, the repressed hostility towards the father may gain an indirect and symbolic gratification. It does so, we noted, in the delight of children in fairy stories, in which the giant is slain by the diminutive hero, in dreams of the father going on a journey, etc. It also finds a symbolic gratification in aggressive nationalism. Hence the hostility towards the enemy is a symbolic means of getting even for all the frustrations of childhood.

In connection with the identification of the country of one's birth with one's mother, there is a question which may occur to the reader. Why, if one's country symbolises one's mother, do some people refer to it as the "fatherland"? To answer this question we must recall what has already been said about the child's conflicting emotions towards the father. He feels hostile towards him because of his ability to frustrate him, to dominate him, to claim a larger share of the mother's attention. But he also admires and loves him, we saw, for his protective strength and his wisdom. Thus, by identifying himself with the father the child shares the power and privileges of the father. He obtains the share of the love of his mother which falls to the father through this identification, for he takes, symbolically, the father's place. We can now see that the idea of "fatherland" is expressive of this identification with the father. For, by fighting for the fatherland, the individual is playing the rôle of the father towards the mother, a loving, protecting rôle, which safeguards her from enemies. In this way, the satisfaction of his love is achieved by a symbolical usurpation of the father's place. And, indeed, this is clear from the fact that even in those countries which are referred to as the "motherland", the positive attitude of willingness to defend and to die for the country is known as *patriotism*. The patriot is one who loves his motherland, one, that is to say, who adopts towards it the protective, loving attitude of the father. It is obvious, then, that in the case of love for the *motherland* the father's attitude is more or less unconsciously assumed. And, in the case of the love for the *fatherland*, the adoption of the father's protective attitude is given more overt form. This is a difference of emphasis which may have traditional and historical roots. Thus, in a country whose national unity has been achieved after particularly difficult and bitter struggles, and which has remained constantly menaced in this unity, there would be a tendency to emphasise the aggressive, paternal rôle of nationalism. The term "fatherland" would not so much

express a tender love for one's own country, as a determined martial spirit on the qui-vive for possible aggressors. This may be true of Germany, for example, whose emergence to national unity was particularly prolonged and tortuous.

These, then, are the basic emotional attitudes which gain expression in nationalism. Nationalism, thus, has its roots deep in the emotional life of the child. Our knowledge of the infantile, emotional roots of nationalism undoubtedly involves a high degree of speculation. Psychological science is as yet far from pronouncing with any large measure of definiteness on the nature of infantile psychology and its relations to adult life. But it is sufficiently advanced to indicate some of the currents which flow beneath the surface of conscious life, to show that there is a complexity of motives which, when revealed to the conscious gaze, baffle and often repel. But, however ludicrous and loathsome these psychological factors may appear, they are no less ludicrous and loathsome than certain aspects of nationalistic phenomena. One has only to think of the thick clouds of hate propaganda which are dispelled by the name of nationalism; the arrogance and conceit which such propaganda seeks to induce; the atrocities on defenceless women and children perpetrated in the name of nationalism. Does not the suggestion that these are outcroppings of infantile impulses seem a mild comment on them? Is not the view that the men who perpetrate them are, in some parts of their psychologies, children who have failed to grow up, quite the most merciful explanation which can be given?

¹ The above is a very simplified account of the symbolic relationship of the "motherland" and the "fatherland" to the early emotional life. The emotional life of the child is very complex. For example, children, particularly girls, might feel frustrated in their love for their father rather than for their mother. In such a case, they may unconsciously identify themselves with the "motherland" as a means of taking the mother's place in the father's affections. But whatever the possible childhood situation, one thing is certain. That is that childhood gives rise to unsatisfied love which seeks substitute satisfaction. What more likely object is there upon which to lavish this unsatisfied love than the land which gave one birth?

presence of emotional impulses of childhood life which, in adult life, gives rise to a serious question. How can we establish society on a rational, scientific basis and yet have men and women remain influenced by their infantile impulses? For these impulses bear all the uncritical and emotional characteristics of childhood and thus would make impossible the establishment of society upon a rational basis. If all this is true, it may be objected, no society organised on rational, Socialist lines could long survive the repressed hate which exists deep in every individual. How then would Socialists deal with these hate

impulses? The answer is that a healthy, rational social environment would encourage the individual to lose these early feelings of emotional aggression. The process of growing up should, normally, involve the development of a self-reliant, adult attitude in adult life. Adult life should provide the possibilities of self-expression and social service in which the frustrations of childhood would find their compensation. The emotional aggression and hostility stored up during childhood should be dissipated.

These possibilities would exist in a Socialist society where men would be freed from the dread of poverty and economic insecurity. They would not be haunted by economic and social problems which frustrate them, which keep alive and augment the hate developed by earlier emotional experiences.

Could family life give rise, to the same extent, to emotional aggression? For much of the frustration of childhood life to-day, is due to the existence of unconscious aggression in the parents. The parents, often, though quite unconsciously, frustrate their children by projecting themselves, were frustrated as children. In other words, the sons of their own parents upon their children. Freedom from unconscious aggression in the parents would therefore reduce the emotional aggressiveness giving rise to unconscious hate in children. That emotional aggression in childhood is inevitable under any social system is not disputed. Socialism, however, does remove the major factors of economic insecurity which keep alive this aggression and thus provide (as mentioned below by Dr. Frankwood Williams) a means of sublimating, in constructive work for society, any residual emotional aggression.

Moreover, as we shall see in the following chapter, unsatisfied love which gives rise to hostility would find ample expression in Socialism. For the love and prob country would have real, objective basis once their countr really belonged to the people.

Few psychologists or educationalists would deny the possibilities. Thus Dr. Frankwood Williams, a well known American psychiatrist, has said: "A social order develop on the basis of men's needs tends to remove those factors that augment the development of aggression within individuals, so that in the developing child aggression may be kept to the minimum (useful and necessary energy) rather than raised to the maximum, where it becomes socially destructive."¹

Similarly, Bertrand Russell, in his work, *Education the Modern World*, describes the new hope and which the freedom from economic insecurity inspires Communist society. "Communism offers a solution of difficult problem of the family and sex-equality, gives children an education from which the anti idea of competition has been almost eliminated. It creates an economic system which appears to be the only practicable alternative to one of masters and slaves. . . . It offers to young men and women a hope which is not chimerical and an activity in the usefulness of which they feel doubt. And if it conquers the world, as it may do, it will solve most of the major evils of our times."

Already in the Soviet Union there is developing a self-reliant, confident, adult attitude which freedom from the economic and social evils of capitalism encourages. Dr. Frankwood Williams' observations on the life and attitude of the young people in the first Soviet country are particularly eloquent of this. Dr. Williams it must be borne in mind, views these people with the experienced eye of a psychiatrist of over twenty years standing.

¹ Dr. Frankwood Williams, *Soviet Russia Fights Neurosis*, (Routledge.)

The same lack of neurotic tension is to be noted in the behaviour of young people out for a walk of an evening down the main street of such towns as Rostov or Tiflis, or in the summer resort towns along the Black Sea, such as Sochi. They are composed of men and women mostly in the ages of eighteen and thirty-five. They fill the sidewalks up to the curbing, two and two, or in groups.

As they go by, they walk along with a healthful vigour and confidence. One who observes them thinks the words 'petting' and the like come into one's mind but rather *joie de vivre*. There is a freedom of talk, there is laughter, but there is no nervousness in the neurotic sense. There is no rushing about, no crowding and shoving, no screaming, no shrill laughter, no high-pitched speech, no horseplay, no boisterousness.

In the towns on the Black Sea where many of them are convalescing in sanatoria for physical illness of one kind or another, they seem to be young people with thoroughly recovered nerves, out for a good time and having it thoroughly.

There is none of the stridency or hysterical tension of the young people at Coney Island or in public parks elsewhere.

One may thus have every confidence that a Socialist society could develop a more rational and self-reliant type of behaviour, undisturbed by infantile impulses of hate. But, unfortunately, these are possibilities of development denied to the mass of the people in capitalist society. Millions live in conditions of enforced idleness. The dread of unemployment, hunger and misery, a general and chronic state of

these are the conditions of life for the mass of the people in capitalism. These are conditions which deny the opportunity for the development of a healthy,

adult attitude. The insecurity of childhood and the child's innate weakness is replaced, in adult life, by economic

insecurity. The hate and resentment of childhood are kept alive and even augmented by capitalist

conditions of deprivation. Life, for the mass of the people in capitalist society, is a

under capitalism, is one long frustration from the cradle to the grave.

This is the reason for the persistence of infantile impulses of hate and resentment in adult life to-day. We must face the fact squarely that capitalist conditions keep alive an infantile fund of hate and aggression which all too easily may be exploited for reactionary ends. If we are earnest in our desire for a more rational order of life, we should be seriously concerned with this fact. How do we prevent this unscrupulous exploitation of the emotional life of the people? This is a question of first importance for every progressive-minded individual.

To answer this question we must first of all consider how the reactionary, or Fascist, exploitation of the emotional life of the people is accomplished.

We have seen that the aggression arising from emotional frustrations in infantile life is kept alive and augmented by capitalist conditions of deprivation. This constitutes a serious problem for capitalist society. Its problem is how to give this aggression some satisfaction without endangering the structure of capitalism. For some expression it must have, since otherwise it would become unbearable and the individual would be impelled to commit some act of violence, perhaps murder or rape.

From a rational point of view, of course, the destructive impulses should be converted to the constructive use involved in rebuilding society. The hatred should be directed towards all that is evil in present society, all that makes for suffering and unhappiness. But this would mean the supersession of capitalism, an event which capitalism seeks to prevent, at all costs. It cannot, therefore, encourage such a rational expression for aggression.

There are, however, a number of channels where aggression may take, which are of little or no danger to capitalism and which, in some cases, may be of great service to capitalism. Aggression, for example, may be satisfied in fantasy. This is shown by the voracious appetite of people for anything involving violence, death

on in their reading, the films they see, etc. Popular and the films owe a great deal of their popularity to the passion that they afford to unsatisfied emotional

The following newsbill is an eloquent example pandering to impulses of aggression:

PARK TRAGEDY
 MAN'S REVOLVER SUICIDE
 DROWNING MYSTERY
 SERVANT AND HER LOVER
 POISONED IN A TAXI-CAB
 FLED UP GIRL ATTEMPTS SUICIDE
 A ROADS SMASH
 LAMPLESS CYCLIST KILLED
 DEAD BABY IN PARCEL
 SCHOOLBOY'S GRUESOME FIND
 POISONED AND DROWNED
 UNKNOWN MAN IN CANAL
 FATAL HESITATION
 WINDOW-CLEANER KILLED

(Poster of *West London Observer*)¹

regaling of people with accounts of gruesome and acts of violence, suicides, etc., is thus a means of satisfying their unconscious aggression. Together with the involvement in violence which may be enjoyed either as spectator or player, this forms the "normal", everyday outlet afforded in capitalist society for aggressive impulses. The everyday expressions of unconscious aggression, therefore, are our main concern. They serve to show, however, that it is important for our purpose, that the aggression created by capitalist conditions of deprivation may be directed into all sorts of channels, harmless to the capitalist system.

This is a fact of first importance. It tells us why Fascist patriotic propaganda may sometimes successfully deflect the aggression of the workers. For, as we shall see,

¹ Quoted by Gerald Barry in *This England*.

the essence of this nationalistic propaganda is to offer substitute gratifications for the workers' aggression. This function of Fascism is one which becomes increasingly important under circumstances which we shall now consider.

We mentioned above the possibility that aggression, under rational direction, could be subordinated to the tasks involved in social reconstruction. Now, in spite of the efforts of the capitalists to prevent this rational expression of aggression, there are certain important factors which tend to encourage it.

In the first place, the increasing insecurity of life during the period of capitalist decline, the growing discrepancies between the possibilities and actualities of social life, create a restlessness and dissatisfaction among the workers which the normal narcotics of cinema, sport, etc., are insufficient to allay. This is a more or less spontaneous reaction to increasing insecurity. It provides, however, a fertile opportunity to Socialists and Communists who seek to elucidate for their fellow-men the causes of their poverty; who seek to guide them in the direction of social reconstruction.

This growing restlessness among the workers and the spread of Socialist teachings naturally becomes a source of considerable alarm to the capitalists. The everyday, "normal" outlets for the workers' hostility, we have seen, no longer suffice; for the hostility of the workers is expressing itself in social and political unrest. The capitalists are therefore impelled to seek a means of canalising the hostility of the workers which, while it does not threaten the existence of capitalism, gives an expression to this social and political unrest. It is the function of Fascism to supply such a means.

The sovereign service that the Fascists render the ruling class is to prevent the aggression stimulated by capitalist conditions of deprivation from leading the people into active struggle against capitalism.

The Fascists, however, are not so foolish as to deny the *need* for struggle. To do this would be completely to lose

touch with the emotional lives of the mass of the people and would render the Fascists of little service to their capitalist paymasters. Consider, for example, the following declaration of Mussolini:

. Fascism does not believe either in the possibility or in the utility of perpetual peace. It therefore disavows the principle of pacifism which counsels a renunciation of struggle and a feeling of cowardice in regard to sacrifice. War alone brings all human energies to their highest tension and stamps the mark of nobility on those peoples which have the courage to face it. All other ordeals are but substitutes which never place a man face to face with himself in the alternative of life and death. Hence a doctrine that is based upon the premise of peace is foreign to Fascism."¹

From the above we see that the impulse to struggle is recognised by the Fascists only in order to divert it along channels of war. Thus the aggressive nationalist propaganda of the Fascists serves the purpose of deflecting the struggle for social reconstruction into channels of racial and national hatred.

This, also, is the reason why the Fascists decry the class struggle as the invention of Socialist and Communist agitators. For the social peace of the complete, unprotesting subservience of the workers is a prerequisite for the prosecution of war.

This is a fact which should burn itself into the minds of all pacifists. Peace in general, simultaneous peace both between classes and between nations, is impossible under capitalism. The hostility aroused by capitalist conditions of deprivation may take the channel of class struggle and lead to social reconstruction, or be deflected into channels of war. But it must take one channel or the other. Responsible capitalist politicians have always fully understood this fact. The late Lord Melchett once observed: "I admire Fascism because it is successful in bringing about

¹ Benito Mussolini, *Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*, (Hogarth Press).

social peace. . . I have been working for years to the same peace in the industrial field of England. Fascism is tending towards the realisation of my political ideals, namely, to make all classes to collaborate for all. Such "loyal collaboration" was also sought during war and guaranteed by the Treasury agreement. It was the agreement trade union leaders agreed "to call off the class struggle during the war".

The alternative between war and acute class struggle has been bluntly put by a well informed bourgeois in England to-day. Criticising the pacifistic proposals of Bertrand Russell, Mr. Harold Nicolson comments: "There is much to be said in theory for the doctrine of non-resistance. But, in practice, it could not endure the provocation to which it would be exposed. Even if it avoided a European war, *we might land ourselves in a war; which is worse.*"

Moreover, it is well known that one of the factors which made the last war imperative for capitalism was the rising tide of working-class struggle. In every country strike movements were afoot. One keen observer remarked: "If the war peril from Germany delayed much longer to materialise, it seemed quite on the cards that it would be forestalled by revolution.—as the Edwardian period passed into the Georgian age. . . class rises against class, faction against faction—it is a question whether the national will not be anticipated by civil war."¹

We can see, therefore, that social peace and national war under capitalism are indeed inseparable. The development by the Fascists of an aggressive nationalistic outlook is bound up with a denial of the existence of class struggle.

Aggressive nationalism is thus the means by which the Fascists exploit the resentment and hostility of the workers stimulated by capitalist conditions of deprivation. It is important, however, to note that it is only because the aggression of the workers has its roots in and

¹ E. Wingfield-Stratford, *The Victorian Aftermath*, p. 10.

that the Fascists can sometimes succeed in
 The resentment and hostility of the workers
 capitalism are, themselves, perfectly justified.
 Capitalism which arouse them are very real.
 alone, these impulses become directed towards
 of capitalism in order to remove them, they
 involves in an eminently rational manner.
 Unfortunately, the hostility and resentment of the
 not always take this rational form. For, although,
 observed, these impulses have objective justifi-
 cation, their infantile, emotional roots tend
 to be credulous and uncritical. This alone explains
 why propagandists can play so easily on the resent-
 ment. The fury and cruelty to which people
 are led by Fascist nationalist propaganda speak
 eloquently of these primitive, and deep, emotional

emphasised, in the foregoing, that the emotional
 exploited by Fascist nationalism are almost wholly
 due to the landless and propertyless condition of
 the capitalist society leaves their love for their
 land unsatisfied. And, as we have seen, un-
 gives rise to aggression.

Sum up, therefore, by saying that Fascist nation-
 logically based upon the exploitation of the
 fully justified hostility to capitalism, a hostility
 made exploitable because it is bound up with in-
 emotional frustrations. To recall the words of Signor
 "Love of one's country but hatred of others, is
 prominent feature of Fascist nationalism. We shall
 see that a nationalism based upon love for one's
 rather than hatred for others is both possible
 and if social progress is to take place. For such
 is the individual to hate the evils which afflict
 the poverty and misery which darken the
 of his fellow country-men. In the following
 shall discuss how such a nationalism, based
 a prerequisite for social reconstruction.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM

WE COME NOW to a practical application of our knowledge of the psychology of nationalism to the problems of Socialism and propaganda. For the question must be present in every reader's mind: "How is it possible to ally the sentiments of nationalism to the struggle for the establishment of Socialism?"

The answer to this question depends on whether recognition is given to the existence of important psychological roots to national sentiments. If it be denied that there are such roots, if it is affirmed that these national sentiments are mere misconceptions of an intellectual kind which can be removed by rational arguments, then, of course, there is no problem. All that is required, under such circumstances, is to explain, patiently and lucidly, that nationalisms have no meaning while the vast majority of people are landless and propertyless; that people are mistaken in regarding national interests of a minority of landowners and capitalists as their own interests.

But this approach, which is the one ordinarily favoured by Socialists and Communists, has been shown by experience to be unreal and ineffective. For it ignores the emotional basis of national sentiments. The result is that not only too often it merely arouses hostility against the Socialist and Communist who uses it. Behind this hostility it is not difficult to detect strong emotional impulse and work. For the Socialist who derides, with blank incomprehension, his fellow-men's feelings of nationalism runs the risk of appearing to them as an intellectual monster who denies a vital fact of human nature. The feeling of repugnance that this denial provokes often takes the form of an accusation which, for effectiveness in creating prejudice against Socialism, is unequalled. The

communist who denies the validity of national feelings the taunt that Socialists love every other country own. This taunt has an important psychological

A significance which expresses an indescribable. For to suggest that the Socialist loves every country but his own, signifies, to the unconscious that the Socialist *loves every other woman but his own*

Occupation has often seemed to have objective away in the interest taken by Socialists in events. The Socialist, aware of the international significance of every defeat or success of the workers' movement has always alertly followed their fortunes. He led "Hands Off China" campaigns; organised for the relief of the victims of Fascist persecution. He has emphasised the need for international of the workers; fought for the freedom of the peoples, hailed the achievements of the Russian

events are undoubtedly of immense importance struggle for Socialism. But to undertake such campaign, first of all, having established one's own on a thoroughly national basis is to vitiate, to stunt, their value. For then the Socialist's interest abroad is seen by the non-Socialist worker as a interest in the fate of our own country. In a word itself indispensable, task of arousing sympathetic in the workers' movements abroad requires delicate

For intensive capitalist education and propaganda implanted in many workers' minds prejudices notions of the foreigner which are with difficulty

How much more difficult is it to encourage, only a sympathetic interest in the workers' movement, but a feeling of actual solidarity which over national barriers and extends to mutual assistance in the struggle for Socialism!

It to be done successfully the Socialist must revise conception of internationalism. He must not regard

internationalism as the replacement of nationalism. For this is to ignore the very real and very important emotional ties between a people and their own land. The internationalism at which the Socialists should aim is a union of nations freed from the dominion of capitalist exploitation, free to develop their own cultures and specific forms of national consciousness, and economically united on the basis of Socialism.

This is the task of Socialists and Communists—to develop the national consciousness in a way which conforms with the internationalism described above. And the fact that this can be done has been demonstrated in the U.S.S.R. For there is, in one sense, no more intensely nationalistic country than she. The feelings of pride and devotion which the citizens of the U.S.S.R. have for their country, have both a subjective and objective basis. The U.S.S.R. belongs to the mass of the people. This gives a strong reality basis to their subjective sentiments of nationalism. Yet within the U.S.S.R. there are a number of different nationalities, such as the Tartars, the Usbecks, the Ukrainians, the Kareleans. These nationalities possess their own languages and cultures and are free to develop in their own way. But they co-operate wholeheartedly in the general tasks of raising the economic and social level of the Soviet Union and the defence of the gains of the Revolution. This is the prototype of the internationalism which one day will embrace the world. Within it the aggression and hatred towards other nations, which are characteristic of the national outlook of Fascist countries, will not exist. For, as we have seen, the aggressive nature of Fascist nationalism is due to the general deprivation of the masses of the people, to their landless and propertyless condition.

The lessons of the rôle of nationalism in the Soviet Union have not been entirely unlearned by the working-class movements of other countries. Thus, there have been attempts to focus the national aspirations of the workers of other lands upon the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is referred to as the "Workers' Fatherland", belonging

to the workers of the world. This is a step in the right direction. But it is at best a transitional step to the realisation of the important rôle of national sentiments. For the idea that the Soviet Union is the fatherland of the workers of the world is as yet too abstract, and therefore too unreal, for most people. The Soviet Union is, after all, a distant land, which most working people are debarred from ever visiting. To think of it as their fatherland requires a high degree of comprehension of the international character of the workers' struggles which sees the achievements of the Russian workers as the achievements likewise of the workers of the world. While it is necessary that this viewpoint be widely spread among the workers, we must not overlook that, for many workers, it gives too remote a basis for the development of the right kind of nationalism. It needs supplementing by a more understanding approach to the sentiments that are aroused by the existence of their own country. The workers of this country, for example, must be encouraged to think of making Great Britain their own as a fulfilment of the love which they feel for her.

No better example of a profound understanding of men's emotional attachment for their land could be given than the slogan with which Lenin expressed the Russian people's deepest needs. When Lenin led the Russian workers to victory he demanded, and taught them to demand, "Peace, Bread and the Land". An English Socialist writer has commented upon Lenin's superb insight in the following words, "Note the superior emotional appeal of the concrete term 'the land' to the abstraction 'socialism'. The psychological genius of Lenin enabled him to teach the Russian workers to win socialism by fighting for 'Peace, Bread and the Land'."¹

The need to understand men's emotional attachment to the land of their birth is, however, becoming increasingly recognised by Socialists and Communists. The Communist leader, Dimitrov, we have seen, ascribed the failure of the Communists in Germany to win wider support as due,

¹ John Strachey, *The Theory and Practice of Socialism*, p. 345.

in part, to a neglect of the wounded national sentiments. And mainly as a result of the experiences of the German Communists, and at the instigation of Dimitrov, the Communists of every land have considerably readjusted their views on national sentiments. They are at last asserting their unanswerable claim to be true patriots, a claim which they had too long neglected to assert, allowing the cheapest, vilest capitalist hacks to pose as lovers of their country when they were lovers of nothing but their dividends. Thus the Communist newspaper, the *Daily Worker*, said: "We Communists are the true patriots. We love our language and our country. And that is why we, more than anybody, are grieved to see to what disgrace our rulers, the capitalist class, have brought it. That is why we struggle against the capitalist class, to win freedom for our country from the rule that has doomed its best sons to unemployment, its women to drudgery, to premature old-age, that is responsible for the social destruction of the youth, that has branded the face of our country with their derelict areas and slums. We are proud that it was in this country that the newly born working people moved forward to their first battles." ¹

Socialists and Communists are the heirs to the glorious traditions of struggle in British history. Their movement is not an exotic growth, alien to British tradition, but a movement deeply rooted in the nation's history. Allen Hutt, a Communist writer, has pointed out how natural the political beliefs of the Communists are to the workers of this country. He quotes a letter appearing in the *Poor Man's Guardian* on August 30th, 1834, more than a decade before the Communist Manifesto. The writer said that "The fruit of such reflections (on strikes and the causes of workers' sufferings) would be a violent hostility against the capitalist class; and the new converts would be prepared to second the efforts of emancipation made by labourers in other quarters of England".² "We can see then," says Hutt, "that the naked confrontation of classes

¹ May 23rd, 1936.

² *This Final Crisis*, p. 34.

which culminated in Chartism was a natural outcome of capitalist social relationships in England. The modern class struggle, in fact, was not the immoral invention of fanatical foreign revolutionaries, but a native English product. Generations before Moscow was a name of revolutionary significance—when, indeed, it still only meant Napoleon and 1812—the class struggle or working men versus capitalists emerged on to the stage of history stamped all over ‘British made by British Capital and Labour’. It has long been the common form of our politicians to ‘deplore’ the ‘fomenting of the class-war spirit’ as ‘something alien to the traditions of English public life’, etc. etc. Before the oldest of these gentlemen was born Ernest Jones, Chartist leader, orator and writer, cried, ‘an amalgamation of classes is impossible . . . these two portions of the community must be separated distinctly, decidedly and openly from each other, *class against class*. All other modes of procedure is mere moonshine’.”¹

It is because Socialists and Communists have an unequalled pride and love for their country that they denounce the exploiters, the capitalists and landowners, who bring suffering and poverty to this country.

Fascism, on the other hand, is a national menace which seeks to destroy the hard-won rights of the people. The Communists must never tire in proving that patriotism itself demands a strong front against the Fascists who would deliver our country over to the tender mercies of the capitalist exploiters.

That this is precisely the rôle of the Fascists is illustrated in the struggle in Spain. How concerned Fascists really are for their native land, what Fascist nationalism really means has been shown by General Franco. Hordes of Moors, the traditional enemies of the Spanish people—the Moors whom it was necessary for the Spanish people to drive out of Spain as a prerequisite to the establishment of the Spanish nation—these were brought to Spain to ravage, to burn and to destroy. For Fascist nationalism

¹ *This Final Crisis* pp. 34-5.

is the raping, looting and burning of one's own country, the symbolic raping of one's own mother, if the interests of the capitalists demand it. Italian and German invaders have followed the Moors. Franco is prepared to reduce his country to the status of a colony of the Fascist powers to serve his capitalist masters.

No wonder the Spanish people have responded with such fierce determination, such heroism and self-sacrifice. They have been sustained not only by economic considerations. They have been strengthened by their love for the land of their birth, which is being so cruelly violated by Fascist hordes. Is it not a crime, a crime against one's own country, to permit the Fascists to lay claim to the title of patriots? Spain is showing who the real patriots are—the Socialists, Communists and democratic, progressive forces who are pouring their blood out to preserve their country from Fascist violation.

Yet there are still many Socialists who are loath to proclaim the patriotic nature of their movement. They think that patriotism can only exist as an emotional device by which the ruling class may ensure itself a ready supply of gun fodder. This, however, is wrong. For to fight for the capitalists who have robbed us of our land, who debar us from enjoying the fruits of our energies applied to our land, is not patriotism. It is rather a distortion of those feelings of love for one's country for the benefit of a few capitalists.

The Socialist and Communist will fight for their country. But just because of their burning patriotism they will, above all, strive and, if need be, fight, to free their country from the grip of capitalist exploitation. Their love of their country is sufficiently strong for them to desire it to be free and happy. In other words, their patriotism does not lead them to fight the battles of the capitalists in order to enslave some other land. It leads them to fight the battle of the masses of the people in order to free their own land from poverty and misery.

In this connection, a recent appeal of the French Communist leader, Maurice Thorez, is of the highest

interest. Thorez, eager to unite all sections of opinion against Fascism as the enemy of the whole French people, appealed for a French Front. It was to be a front which went beyond the Popular Front of the Left and democratic parties. All who were concerned for the national safety against the menace of Hitler were invited to participate in the French Front. However, the suggestion met with the opposition of many French Socialists, to whom the appeal for a national French Front seemed sacrilegious. It offended their convictions that nationalism and patriotism had nothing in common with Socialism—and so the French Front had to be dropped. None the less Thorez's speech, in which the appeal was made, remains an enlightened and courageous recognition of the need to demonstrate the basic truth that the struggle against Fascism is to-day the highest expression of men's love of their country. It shows an intense understanding of the emotional issues involved and should serve as an inspiration to all Communists and Socialists. Below I give a few extracts from it.

"And we Communists who have worked with such fierceness, even passion, to unite the working class in one front, in a pact for unity of action, we who have not ceased to work for an International Front, who have worked to unite workers and peasants, revolutionaries and democrats, Communists and Socialists, Radicals and Republicans, who have stretched out our hands, not unsuccessfully, to Catholics, to former members of the Croix de Feu, we think it possible to extend the front still further for the safety of our people.

"*We desire the French Front* . . . a French Front for the protection of the national economy, to assure to the working class, thanks to the revival of economic activity, the blessing of wage increases, holidays with pay, forty hour week, etc. To establish on solid foundations, by our solicitude towards the middle classes, towards the peasants, shopkeepers, artisans and small business men, the cohesion and strength of our people . . . a French Front for

the security and independence of the country so that Hitler may know that his insolent blustering and his war-time gestures in no way frighten us, that they only make us measure with more precision the immense task which faces all men of good will, so that the world may escape from another bloody carnage.

"We have no hatred, no resentment against any people; we are conscious of being the inheritors of a glorious past of which we will not allow ourselves to be deprived, for we Communists are proud to be French. . ."¹

This indeed is an understanding approach to the French people. It is an appeal to the revolutionary traditions of that country, a revival of the revolutionary significance of the tricolour and the "Marscillaise". The fact that the defence of France has become a revolutionary act is revealed by Thorez; for that defence has become synonymous with the defence against Fascist aggression. The keynote of this approach is the sacredness of France from Fascist violation, the psychological significance of which needs no interpretation.

The task, then, of Socialists and Communists is to win the love and devotion of the masses. To prove to them that they are the true patriots, striving to lift the people from the misery and poverty in which they are sunk. They cannot do this by ill-considered assaults on the national sentiments of the people. On the contrary, they must prove, by active leadership on every national issue, that their policy alone can fulfil the deepest aspirations of the people. And they must give a revolutionary content to these national aspirations by associating them with the struggle for freedom from capitalist domination. In this way, the love of country will be linked with hatred of those who are really responsible for the misery which exists within it. The feelings of aggression resulting from continued deprivation will be directed against those who, by their ownership of the land and the means of production, have condemned the masses to poverty.

¹ *World Review*, Oct. 1936.

A final consideration. If Socialists and Communists feel that such phrases as "love for country", "patriotism", etc., are concessions to the prejudices and emotions of the people, tactical devices made for the sake of winning support, they will fail—and deserve to fail. For such an attitude conceals a sneer at the stupidity of the people. Behind it there lies the belief that patriotism has no real objective basis, that it is a sentimental delusion produced by deceitful capitalist propaganda. Accordingly, in making appeals to national sentiment, the Socialist is merely exploiting a foolish delusion because it is far easier to do so than to work for its removal.

This line of reasoning is fatally wrong. It is based upon an almost complete ignorance of psychological facts. It is a fact, for example, that we all possess a capacity to love, even as we possess the capacity to eat. And so long as we are impelled by our love to seek objects upon which to expend our love, to expend it on our native land is extremely rational. For our whole lives are bound up with our country, our hopes, our Socialist future, our very sustenance depends upon it. The very idea that we ought to be ashamed of the fact that we love our country is monstrous. We profess to love art, or literature, or the theatre—any number of less concrete things than the land that gave us birth. It seems to me that the inability to acknowledge love for one's country is an expression of the primitive repression of the early love for the mother. For in consciously denying love for one's country, one is augmenting the repression on the infantile love impulses in the same way as the conscious repugnance towards incest is a device to secure the continued repression of incestuous desires.

It is an interesting speculation as to how much those Socialists who persist in ridiculing love for their country are unconsciously influenced by such repressions.

Let us not think then that we are condescending to the emotional level of the masses when we confess our patriotism. Let us rather understand that the depth of this love

is a sure guarantee of the success of Socialism. For in the attainment of Socialism, sacrifices will have to be made, difficulties overcome, which require more than the pursuit of mere economic interests as incentives. The force which impels the Socialist to lay down his life for his cause, as he did in Russia and as he is doing, as I write, in Spain, cannot be assessed solely in terms of economics. There is this capacity to love deep in us all. We should not despise it because it manifests itself in patriotism any more than when it manifests itself in Socialism. In a sense, the Socialist is a patriot whose love is illuminated by his intellectual grasp of the realities of social life. His task is to spread this illumination to others, to light the path to the freeing of the nation from the grip of capitalist exploitation.

This patriotism can grow into love of humanity in general. We have an example in Spain to-day of how the love of humanity, the hatred of all oppression, can transcend national barriers. In the International Brigade men of different nationalities fight side by side against their common enemy—Fascism. Each fights for the freedom of his own country. All fight for the freedom of all.

CHAPTER IX

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DEMAGOGY

A FACT WHICH strikes one most forcibly when considering Fascism is the devotion and loyalty which such men as Hitler and Mussolini can command. For it would be the most dangerous form of self-delusion to insist that the Fascist régimes are based solely upon terror. There is a mass basis to these régimes, a basis of unquestioning obedience to the leaders and the utmost faith in their infallibility. Something of the attitude of millions of Germans to Adolf Hitler is expressed in the following words of Göring. (No doubt the latter writes with his tongue in his cheek, but what he says indubitably corresponds to a widespread attitude among the supporters of Hitler.)

"Just as the Roman Catholic considers the Pope infallible in all matters concerning religion and morals, so do we National Socialists believe with the same inner conviction that for us the Leader is in all political and other matters concerning the national and social interests of the people simply infallible. Wherein lies the secret of this enormous influence which he has on his followers? . . . it is something mystical, inexpressible, almost incomprehensible which this unique man possesses, and he who cannot feel it instinctively will not be able to grasp it at all. For we love Adolf Hitler, because we believe deeply and unswervingly that God has sent him to us to save Germany."¹

To understand this "mystical, inexpressible and almost incomprehensible" influence we shall have to consider an important psychological phenomenon known as *Regression*. Regression is a process which takes place when the individual mind is confronted with difficulties and problems which it feels unable to cope with alone. The world of reality thwarts and baffles the mind, raising insuperable obstacles to the satisfaction of the individual's needs. The

¹ *Germany Reborn.*

mind is impelled to seek an escape from this cruel reality and it does so by regressing to a level when the solution of its problems presented no such difficulties. This was a stage in the history of the individual when he was weak and helpless but had somebody to shoulder the burden of his existence for him. In other words, the adult mind, haunted by the difficulties of the external world, yearns for the protection which the child receives from his father, and regresses to this infantile level. It seeks to revive the infantile relationship of dependence on the father as a means of escape from the problems of reality.

But the protection which the father gives the child is subject to certain conditions. The father demands absolute obedience in return for his protection. He is an unquestionable authority, an autocrat who arranges, without consultation, what the child shall eat, wear, when he shall sleep, etc. This is a fact which cannot be over-emphasised. However indulgent parents may be to their children, the last word rests with them. Their greater strength, knowledge and experience must inevitably make them appear to the childish mind as superior beings, gods who can do almost anything they please. They have the power, which must strongly impress the childish mind, of granting or refusing his wishes. The father, in particular, must impress the child in this way. For upon him generally falls the task of enforcing prohibitions; his rôle in the household is generally the sterner one, in contrast to the tender duties of the mother.

Hence, the adult mind which yearns for the security of childhood must be prepared to give the same unquestioning obedience to the father. In religion, for example, the father is sought in the shape of God. And to God obedience is offered in return for His protection. But the seeking of the father in religion is a consequence of the more or less state of insecurity arising from the conditions of human life, hitherto. It does not, as yet, reflect an acute degree of insecurity. When, however, the insecurity does reach a high degree of intensity, the solaces of religion begin to pale. For the Almighty Father in the Heavens is too remote,

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too abstract a notion, while the problems of life are too real, too painful, to be salved with heavenly ointment. And in such a situation the people's minds are ready for the earthly saviour who asks for nothing less than unquestioning obedience, and who promises nothing less than freedom from poverty and insecurity.

"The German people," says Göering, "breathe again, because at last a man is now thinking and working to abolish need and distress, and because they will no longer be forced to lead themselves. The great error of the previous system of liberalism was to imagine that the people wanted to govern themselves, to lead themselves. No, the people want to be led, and to be governed. . . . And the German people know that the longed-for and inspired leader is Adolf Hitler."¹

Millions of German people, therefore, have found in Hitler the father for whom they have been seeking. Unable to face reality alone, they have turned to him with the pathetic trustfulness of children. This, we have said, is a regressive process. But to grasp the full significance of this return to an infantile dependence upon the father, to whom obedience is offered in return for his protection, we must consider the development of another important psychological factor.

We have mentioned (in Chapter VII) the tendency for the child to identify himself with his father. He admires his father for his strength and wisdom and seeks, through identification, to share in these qualities. This is accomplished by identifying a portion of his mind with the father. The rôle of the father is assumed, so to speak, within the childish mind. It is as if the child's mind begins by saying, "I would be like my father", and then, "I am my father". But it is important to recognise that this image of the father which becomes impressed on the child's mind, is the image of the father *as he appears to the child*. In other words, it is an image of a being whose commands brook no questioning, who is all-wise and all-powerful; a stern, arbitrary being. And just as the father rebuked and forbade the infantile wishes, so, too, does the image of the father

¹ *Germany Reborn*, pp. 89-90.

in the child's mind forbid and rebuke. It does so in the familiar pangs of conscience, which are aroused when a forbidden act is contemplated. The voice of conscience, in other words, is the voice of the father. This image of the father has been termed, by Freud, the *super-ego*. "The super-ego," says Freud, "takes the place of the parental function, and thenceforward observes, guides and threatens the ego in just the same way as the parents acted to the child before."¹

In the adult mind the authority of this parental voice is somewhat counterbalanced by a developed sense of reality. For many of the demands of this voice tend to appear, in the light of reality conditions, as irrational. Thus with the growing contact which the adult has with the external world the authority of the father tends to weaken. It lingers on in those demands of conscience which are inexplicable, which we feel we have to obey, but can give no adequate reason for doing so. It is also responsible for the more or less uncritical allegiance to the existing authoritative forces of law and order. In a number of activities of daily life, we can trace its influence. It makes for the success of all those methods of influencing people by appeals to prestige, whether it is an exhortation to smoke someone's cigarettes because "doctors recommend it", or to support a political organisation because the fatherly features of its leader smile benevolently down upon you from a hoarding.²

¹ The conscience is, strictly speaking, one aspect only of the super-ego. The compulsions of the super-ego are largely unconscious and extremely more arbitrary and tyrannical than the compulsions of the conscience. Nor must we think of the image of the father as a kind of photographic reproduction. It is rather the assumption of certain functions which the father appears to have to the infantile mind. But for the sake of exposition we may extend the term conscience to cover the compulsions of the super-ego and refer to the father-substitute or father image, when we need to describe the tendency to seek for the father in the outer world.

² One enterprising firm which gives postal instructions to young men seeking careers, made a clever use of this method. It published a picture of an elderly and kindly-looking man, with the light of wisdom shining in his eyes. Beneath this picture was the caption, "Let me be a father to you".

But these manifestations of the influence of the father, irrational as they may be, do not prevent the adult from responding to reality demands in respect of many of his problems. He possesses a certain degree of confidence in his own ability to solve these problems. In other words, he does not feel impelled to fall back on the sole guidance of the omnipotent father of childhood conception in his relations with the world. He manifests an *adult* attitude towards the world.

But when the orderliness of his life is disturbed; when reality suddenly takes on a threatening aspect, presenting him with difficulties which, strive as he may, he cannot solve, his faith in his own unaided abilities begins to waver.

This is the situation in which the unheeded voice of his father begins to take control of the mind. The individual is impelled to seek for someone who will give him the protection which he received in his childhood. He is prepared to submit his fate in his hands; to accept, without question, his authority, for the protection which he passionately desires. He seeks for the all-powerful father, who, when he was a child, shouldered the whole responsibility for his existence. This is the explanation of the "mystical" influence which gives Hitler his power over millions of German people. He has become their "father", who will protect them and provide for them. He is the centre of their hopes, their saviour. And he has achieved this position in the minds of millions of the German people by the cruellest of demagogic means.

"Demagogy is the art of playing on the hopes and fears, the emotions and ignorance of the poor and suffering for the benefit of the rich and powerful. It is the meanest of the arts. This is the art of Fascism."¹ The demagogue strives to make himself the centre of the hopes of the afflicted masses, attracting their allegiance with false promises to alleviate their sufferings. It is the fact that this support is gained with false hopes and deceits which constitutes his demagogy. Hitler excels in this lavish distribution of false promises. "He was everything to everybody. To the rich he and his followers promised low

¹ R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 188.

wages and high profits; to the poor, Socialism and a national commonwealth. To the Junkers, protection of the big estates, and higher duties on grain: to the poor peasants, lower priced fertiliser and higher duties on imported vegetables and meat. To the hired farm hands, land and decent housing. To the unemployed he offered jobs. To unmarried women, husbands. To the political 'outs', participation in power. Speaking to the expropriated middle class, he attacked the Socialist workmen; to the workmen, the greedy capitalists; to all he promised a greater fatherland, no more reparations, national expansion with more territory, and a helpless, ever present scape-goat for all their errors and mistakes and suffering in the form of the Jews!"¹ That of these promises the only ones which he has striven to realise are those made to the rich and the landowners subsequent events in Germany have shown. We need only instance the following. A prominent feature of Fascist propaganda before the rise of Hitler to power was the vigorous denunciations of finance. At the beginning of 1934 a Nazi minister, Adolf Wagner, fulminated against the banks in strong terms: "Many things are going on as if the Nazi Revolution had never taken place. Cut-throats are still in control of the banks. Under cover of the slogan 'No interference with economic life is permitted', the vermin are now venturing to show themselves once again. National Socialism cannot tolerate these things. During the last few days I have put into operation certain measures which will not be to the liking of these gentry." This typical piece of demagoguery brought forth a reassurance from the President of the Reichsbank to all bank directors in which he showed how, in the first year of National Socialism, the price level of all stocks at fixed interest on the Berlin Stock Exchange had been raised. Referring to Wagner's remarks, Dr. Schacht observed: "The imputation that the National Socialist Government, in a whole year of activity, has not yet been able to stop cut-throats and parasites from making themselves felt in German

¹ E. A. Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, pp. 267-8.

banking seems to me, with all my understanding of demagogues, a bit too thick . . . *don't worry too much about the mud-slinging that now and then you have to put up with here and there.*

All the same the Reichsbank has managed to raise the price-level of all stocks at fixed interest on the Berlin Stock Exchange by 13 per cent in the first twelve months of the National Socialist Government" (Speech at the conference of the Central Association of German Bankers, Feb. 1934).¹ In other words, the attack on the bankers was a piece of sheer deceit. For while it continued, the bankers were able to raise the price level of stocks, in uninterrupted control of the banking system.

The demagogic character of Italian Fascism is clear from Mussolini's programme in 1921, which declared for Republicanism, the confiscation of Church property, and super-war profits. The land was to be given to the peasants, the Stock Exchange abolished, industry transferred to syndicates of workers and peasants. But as Gentile, Fascist "philosopher", says with such charming candour: "It (Fascism) has often announced reforms when the announcement was politically opportune, but to the execution of which it, nevertheless, did not believe itself to be obliged."

E. A. Mowrer, in his brilliant book, quotes a letter from a Nazi Party leader, to a Weimar industrialist who was becoming alarmed by the anti-capitalist complexion of Nazi propaganda.

"Do not let yourself be continually confused," were the reassuring words, "by the text of our posters. . . Of course there are catchwords like 'Down with capitalism', 'Jews', etc., but these are necessary (unquestionably), for under the flag of 'German national' or 'national' alone, you must know, we should never reach our goal, we should have no future. We must talk the language of the embittered Socialist workmen . . . or else they wouldn't feel at home with us. We don't come out with a direct programme . . . for reasons of diplomacy."²

¹ R. Braun, *Fascism Make or Break*, p. 28.

² E. A. Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, p. 357.

By such deceits does the demagogue attempt to win over the people. His intention is to frustrate any revolutionary impulses which might be engendered by economic sufferings, to divert the struggle against capitalism into channels of hatred of other nations, and futile bursts of anti-semitic venom. The Fascist leader is able to do this, we saw, by virtue of the fact that he has become the centre of the hopes of millions of people. But how has he achieved this position? What are the conditions which he can successfully exploit to win the regard, the faith and hope of so many people? These are important questions to which we now turn.

The demagogue becomes influential in circumstances of extreme economic suffering. The masses of the people are plunged in abysmal hopelessness; they can see no way out of their present plight. Reality rains blow after blow on their unprotected heads and they look pathetically around for a deliverer. It is a situation analogous to that which confronts the child who ventures forth into the world without the protection and guidance of his father. He finds the world too bewildering, too full of perils and hastens to the sanctuary of his father's house. Likewise, the masses, in seeking a deliverer, are regressing to an infantile level. They do not want the responsibility of adulthood; they want someone to take their problems on his shoulders, to provide for their wants, to whom their only responsibility is obedience.

This is an attitude of despair. It expresses, as a Fascist publication once put, "the hope of doomed men".¹ How is it that such a pessimistic spirit, a loss of faith in one's own abilities, can capture so many minds? The answer, of course, is that they have suffered defeat, with victory within grasp. For various reasons, the revolt which was in them, the determination to take things into their own hands, to rule themselves, has been frustrated, leaving them with a feeling of hopelessness and lack of self-confidence. Just as the child whose rebelliousness towards the parents turns into submissiveness when it avails nothing,

¹ *Blackshirt*, Sept. 16th, 1933.

so the revolutionary spirit of the peoples of Fascist countries has been emptied by disappointments. This is particularly so in Germany. Let us briefly review, once more, the course of events there. The revolution of 1918, which broke the power of the military, led to the institution of a Republican government, which proceeded to hand the power back to the generals. The workers were pacified with a Weimar constitution. And in the period of the occupation of the Ruhr and the inflation of the Mark, the revolutionary pressure of the German masses became once again insistent. The KPD (the German Communist Party) in the summer of 1923 had more influence in the country than did the Social Democrats. But instead of organising insurrection the leaders of KPD preferred to negotiate for a parliamentary alliance with the Social Democrats. Once again the revolutionary feelings of the workers were disappointed. Beyond an abortive insurrection in Hamburg, the revolutionary impulses of the workers were allowed to peter out. And immediately preceding the formation of the Fascist Government, the masses were faced with a division of forces of the two main anti-Fascist parties.

We are not concerned, for the moment, with the rights or wrongs on either Communist or Social Democratic side. The fact we wish to establish is that the hopelessness in Germany, which the Fascists could successfully exploit, followed the constant frustration of the revolutionary impulses of the German masses.

In this connection the following extract from a recently published Communist work is of interest:

"A well-known writer once said that the most important happening in nineteenth-century England was the revolution that did not happen. In a more far-reaching sense it may be said that the most important fact of post-war Central and Western Europe and beyond is the Socialist revolution that did not happen, or rather, the high revolutionary struggles that for the time ended in defeat. This issue lies behind all the subsequent crucifixion of Versailles, of the world economic crisis, of mass unemployment and

suffering, of declining standards of life and rising armaments, of the madhouse of Fascism."¹

An important factor which contributed to this lack of faith and hopelessness was the so-called failure of democracy. In a democracy of the kind which obtains in capitalist countries, there is a widespread illusion of self-government and power, while, in fact, the real control of the country remains in the hands of the capitalist class. Thus, says R. P. Dutt, "The Weimar Republic was on paper 'the freest democracy in the world'. In reality, it covered the maintenance and protection of the reactionary institutions of the old régime". Because of this illusion of self-government, the failure of the democracy to solve the most pressing problems of economic life was interpreted as a failure of the people to govern themselves. The result was that discontent became directed towards the democratic form of government. The following dialogue which appears in an account of the terroristic acts of the German Fascists eloquently presents this attitude:

"Isn't it a fact that since 1918 we simple people have directed the fate of Germany? And what has been the result? Poverty! Lies! Degeneracy! Disunion and murder! —No, Karl, I want it to be as it was in the war: officers and soldiers. In democracy everybody was an officer, they all had their say and no one had anything to eat. Now we want to be soldiers again, soldiers of Hitler; he is our officer, he must do the thinking for us, he must rack his brains how to find us work and bread. .

"Has Hitler then given you work and bread?

"Not yet.

"Oh!—and how do you think he is going to find work for five million unemployed?

"How?—Well, that is for him to rack his brains about! It doesn't matter in the least to me *how* he does it. *He* is the officer! I only want to have work and bread, and in return be a loyal soldier to him. He will do it."²

¹ R. P. Dutt, *World Politics, 1918-1936*, p. 42, (Gollancz.)

² H. Liepmann, *Murder Made in Germany*, p. 146.

What could be more eloquent of the pathetic hopelessness which destroyed the adult confidence in one's own abilities to face the external world. It is as if a child is appealing piteously for his father's help, content to leave all problems to him in return for his protection. How could democracy have reduced millions of Germans to this infantile state?

We must consider what democracy signifies to the unconscious mind. Theoretically democracy gives every individual equal political rights. To the unconscious, this equality of rights symbolises an equality of rights with the father. The sons, as it were, have banded together, as Freud surmises they did in the early days of the human family, and cast out the cruel and tyrannical father. And then, finding that things were failing miserably, they abjectly petitioned for the return of the despotic father, to whom they were prepared to humble themselves in return or his protection.

This was the reaction of millions of Germans who were disheartened by the failure of their democratic régime, and was cleverly used by Hitler. He denounced the "parliamentary principle of the consent of the majority" as sinning "against the basic aristocratic principle in nature". And, as an alternative, he offered "the true German democracy with free choice of leader, along with his obligation to assume entire responsibility for all he does and causes to be done."¹

The success of this kind of propaganda would have been impossible, however, were it not for the fact that the German ruling class saw in Fascism its only means of preserving its class rule.

The economic and social factors which gave rise to this need were discussed in Part I. But now we have elucidated some of the psychological factors whose existence explain why Fascist propaganda has been able so well to serve the ruling class; why, that is, such propaganda has been able to blind a large section of the people to their most urgent economic interests. Hence, we can see how import-

¹ *My Struggle*, p. 48.

ant it is to understand not only the economic interests at stake, not only why the ruling class is impelled to place political power in the hands of Fascists. We must also know what psychological factors are responsive to the appeals by which the Fascists win mass support for their policy.

An economic and political analysis of a situation which is fraught with revolutionary and reactionary possibilities can only describe the character of the forces arraigned in struggle. It can tell us what political interests are served by reaction and what by Socialism. But the problem of organising for Socialism involves more than an insight into the political interests concerned. It requires a knowledge of the emotional life of the individual if its exploitation at the hands of the Fascists is to be prevented.

Thus, we have seen, Socialist propaganda which, in Germany, ignored the psychological roots of nationalism, was seriously deficient, while, on the other hand, reactionary propaganda was permitted to exploit these emotional factors for reactionary ends.¹ The masses, we must remember, are not always able to discriminate between a false demagogic expression of their interests and that expression which is coupled with a genuine determination to realise them.

The wise Socialist and Communist, therefore, will seek to understand the emotional as well as the political aspects of leadership. He will learn that, whether he desires it or not, leadership awakens the unconscious, emotional attitude to the father. If he really wishes to lead, he must understand this fact. For it imposes a tremendous responsibility upon him which demands his sympathetic understanding of the emotional make-up of his supporters, if he is to justify the confidence placed in him.

There is, however, a vast difference between the Socialist, armed with a psychological understanding, and the Fascist demagogue whose methods manage to win for

¹ In a later chapter we shall discuss the fact that the Fascist demagogues do not necessarily understand these psychological factors. They are, we shall see, what might be called instinctively good psychologists.

him the uncritical support of the masses. The latter has no real concern for the masses. Once he has won their allegiance he must demand, and if needs be compel, their unquestioning obedience. For he dare not permit them any form of freedom; he must ruthlessly crush any tendency to question his intentions. And so long as he can feed the hopes of the people with promises, they will submit to his ruthlessness. The only way he can fulfil the rôle of a father-substitute for the masses is by a tyrannical exaction of obedience, which must inevitably evoke an unconscious revolt in the minds of the people. But so long as the people remain convinced that he can really protect them and provide for them, the revolt against this tyrannical father will remain unexpressed, will be repressed. But when the masses lose faith in his ability to give them this protection, as they eventually must, what vials of mad wrath will be poured on his head!

It would however be disastrous to count upon this disillusionment with the Fascist leaders developing in an automatic fashion as a result of continuing economic depression. Once the Fascists have obtained power, the realisation on the part of the masses of the inability of Fascism to solve any of their basic problems may take decades to mature. At the time of writing there is no example of an established Fascist power which has fallen because of such a realisation. In Italy, for example, the conditions of the Italian workers have steadily grown worse, yet there is little evidence that the enthusiasm for Mussolini is appreciably on the wane. On the contrary, Mussolini does not even trouble to disguise the fact of those hardships. Instead, so strong is the spell which he has cast over the Italian people that he can present the failure of the Fascists to improve the conditions of the Italian workers as something really praiseworthy. Thus, speaking of a period when, he forecasts, humanity will have to repose on a lower standard of life, he declares: "We must rid our minds, however, of the idea that what we have called days of prosperity may return. We are probably moving towards a period of humanity reposing on a lower standard of life. We must not

be alarmed at the prospect. Such a humanity may be very strong and capable of asceticism and heroism such as we perhaps have no conception of.”¹

The unpleasant fact is that so long as hope can be maintained in the hearts of the people they will suffer the most terrible hardships bravely. Indeed they will regard themselves as performing heroic sacrifices for their children and future generations.

Again, Mussolini could proudly announce, in a speech to the Italian Senate, that “fortunately the Italian people is not yet accustomed to eat several times a day. Its standard of living is so low that it feels scarcity and suffering less.” And no doubt the Italian people, on reading these words, felt that they indeed were a hardy and spartan people, who spurned the luxury of several meal-times.

In a similar way, in Germany, the people are exhorted to self-denial. The following extract from a speech by General Göring is an example of these appeals. It contains a grotesque note of comedy which accentuates the tragedy of this exploitation of a nation’s capacity for self-sacrifice by Fascist mercenaries. According to the Berlin correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*: “A personal confession followed. ‘I have given up eating so much butter,’ said the General amid sympathetic cheers which became uproarious when he added, ‘and the result is that I have lost over a stone and a half.

“‘Our Leader is building up a strong nation. If we eat too much we shall get too fat. I am eating less myself and I always remember our Leader eats no butter and no meat. What he can do, we can.’”²

It would be foolish therefore, to expect Fascism to collapse merely as a result of growing economic distress. The capacity for self-sacrifice which the mass of the people possess is almost illimitable, once they are imbued with hope. The extent of this capacity was shown by the Russian people, who went through civil war and famine

¹ G. Salvemini, *Under the Axe of Fascism*, pp. 226-7.

² *Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 29th, 1936.

because they believed in the ultimate ability of the Communists to lead them to a higher standard of life. These were not illusory hopes on the part of the Russian people. Unfortunately the corresponding hopes of the German and Italian peoples are illusory. But so long as they remain under the spell of these false hopes they will exhibit a similar capacity to self-sacrifice.

So long, therefore, as the Fascist leaders can retain their prestige among their followers the internal economic hardships will do little to shake the faith of these followers. And, we must acknowledge, this prestige has been more than maintained. For it cannot be denied that both Hitler and Mussolini have scored such sensational triumphs in the realms of foreign politics that they must inevitably appear to the Italian and German peoples in a heroic light. Both have successfully defied the League of Nations; Mussolini has conquered an Empire, Hitler armed in defiance of the Versailles Treaty, concluded a Naval pact with Great Britain, marched his troops into the demilitarised zone. They undoubtedly have been permitted to do these things by the acquiescence of the outside capitalist world. For the capitalist governments of the world, particularly our own, have a deeply-rooted fear that if Fascism falls in Germany or Italy, Communism will follow. For this reason, they are prepared to tolerate the swashbuckling methods of the Fascist leaders as necessary means of maintaining the Fascist régimes. Both Mussolini and Hitler play fruitfully upon this fear. It is their trump card and well they know how to play it.

The astute capitalist politician, Lloyd George, has described Germany to-day as the bulwark against Communism in Europe. In a speech in the House of Commons he said: "She (Germany) is planted right in the centre of Europe, and if her defence breaks down against the Communists—only two or three years ago a very distinguished German statesman said to me: 'I am not afraid of Nazism, but of Communism'—and if Germany is seized by the Communists, Europe will follow; because

the German could make a better job of it than any other country.

"Do not let us be in a hurry to condemn Germany. We shall be welcoming Germany as our friend."¹

We see, therefore, that so long as the external capitalist world is willing to be scared by the bogey of Bolshevism the Fascist leaders can pose heroically before their own people. They can do so with the confident knowledge that their sabre-rattlings and magnificent defiance will meet with little effective response from the outside capitalist world. Thus when Göring virtually accused Great Britain of stealing the German colonies and her gold and when Göbbels, in justification of Göring's speech, referred to the comments in the English Press as "insulting and impudent", beyond a mild protest, nothing occurred. The fact that the speeches were intended for internal consumption rather than the ears of the foreign world seemed sufficient explanation. They were, in other words, part of the Fascist bluster with which the Fascist leaders maintain their prestige at home.

This, then, is why the Fascist leaders can strut and pose on the international stage with comparative safety. It is because they can play upon the fear of Communism; because they can represent themselves as the bulwark against Communism; because the outside capitalist world knows full well that the stability of the Fascist régimes depends upon the leaders maintaining their prestige within their countries.

It is important to realise how essential for the maintenance of the Fascist régimes are these triumphs of foreign policy. Not only do they contribute to the prestige of the leaders. They induce that vainglorious nationalistic outlook which regards the German or the Italian peoples as possessing qualities of courage and greatness, far superior to those of other nations. For the most insignificant member of the German or Italian nation can swell with pride when he reads, or hears, how his Führer or Duce has once again proclaimed the might of his nation.

¹ House of Commons, Nov. 28th, 1934.

So long as the world outside Fascism is tolerantly disposed towards the Fascist leaders, they have little to fear. And, in consequence, they can maintain their hold on the minds of their countrymen. That is why the breakdown of Fascism depends, to a large extent, on the development of a worldwide anti-Fascist front. Not only are anti-Fascist movements safeguards against the development of Fascism at home, but they are the best means of aiding the deluded peoples of Fascist countries, and, particularly, those heroic Socialists and Communists who, under tremendous difficulties, are organising anti-Fascist revolt. A determined anti-Fascist world will do much to break the spell of the Fascist leaders. For such a world will be one which will not be scared by threats of Communist revolution. There are to-day many liberal and even conservative-minded individuals to whom the risk of Communist revolution seems worth running if it means ridding the world of the hate and war provocation, the destruction of cultural achievements, which Fascism means.

Under such circumstances the Fascist leaders would not be able to pose with safety as men of iron, flinging defiance in the teeth of the world. They would, consequently, be no longer able to rely on diverting the attention of their followers from domestic difficulties by their heroic gestures. And in this way will be removed an important source of their psychological strength. For it is their ability to pose as fearless national saviours which attracts the blind following and faith of millions. We have no reason to believe that these men are really possessed of exceptional courage, that, in the face of a world unwilling to be scared by their talk of Bolshevik revolution, they would, none-the-less, maintain their heroic poses. On the contrary, there are quite good reasons for supposing that their courage is largely verbal.

Konrad Heiden, who is one of the most reliable historians of the National Socialist movement describes a revealing episode in the life of Hitler. On the eve of the inglorious *putsch* of November 1923, Hitler declared that the morrow

would see him victorious or dead. With superb melodrama, he accompanied these words with a revolver shot towards the ceiling of the Loewenbraeu of Munich. The following day, however, while many of his followers met their deaths at the hands of the Government troops, Hitler saved himself by so forcibly flinging himself to the pavement as to sprain his arm. He then ran for his car, leaving his men behind to the mercy of the Government troops, and drove rapidly towards the mountains. Nor does his war career indicate any especial qualities of courage. He served for four years as an orderly, a rank which, as Rudolf Olden, another biographer, observes, gave only the rarest of opportunities to men of courage to go to the front and to win promotion. The result was that the future saviour of Germany never got beyond the rank of corporal and was awarded the second-class Iron Cross, which award was automatically given to long-service soldiers. (Later, however, when the Republican Government was too timid to deal with him, he took to wearing the first-class Iron Cross.)

The one-time Premier of Fiume, comrade-in-arms of d'Annunzio, namely, Alceste de Ambris, describes Mussolini's war career in the following words:

"Mussolini preferred to wait until his class was called. Once at the front, he passed almost all his time in the special school, the school for officers, and in the hospital. In the trenches he stayed a total of thirty-eight days, and never took part in action. The wounds on which he prides himself, thanks to which there was an end to the brilliant career as warrior, were received during grenade practice, in a training-school, miles to the rear. It was an accident, nothing heroic. The gravity of the wounds was due to the fact that a disease had poisoned his blood. When healed, this thundering warrior stayed in Milan until all danger of a return to the front had passed. This is the entire glorious history of the participation in the war of Mussolini, who had preached intervention with fervour."¹

¹ Quoted by George Seldes, *Sawdust Caesar*, p. 55.

Of such stuff are Fascist heroes made!

In this chapter I have attempted to show that the leader is the father-substitute for his followers. Whoever aspires to the leadership of the masses is, whether he realises it or not, aspiring to fill this important psychological rôle. This is why Socialists should understand the psychological need for the father's protection. If they are to combat the demagogic play on the workers' hopes and fears which leads them to see in a Hitler or a Mussolini a saviour, they cannot afford to ignore the psychological implications of leadership. For the need which impels the workers to look for guidance and leadership is a very real one. It arises, we have seen, from the unbearable conditions of life, the growing hopelessness of their plight, which stimulate and revive the infantile need for the father's protection.

The Socialist leader, however, seeks to encourage a self-reliant, adult attitude in the masses. He guides and counsels the masses, but he also turns to them for guidance and counsel. He is like a wise father whose object is to help his children to an independent, courageous attitude to life. Stalin has expressed the relationship of the Socialist leaders to the masses in the following words:

"Lenin taught us not only to teach the masses, but also to learn from them. What does this mean?

"We leaders must not become conceited, we must not think that if we are members of the Central Committee or are People's Commissars, this means that we possess all the necessary knowledge to give correct leadership. .

"Our experience alone, the experience of leaders, is insufficient to give correct leadership; consequently it is necessary that one's experience, the experience of leaders, be supplemented by the experience of the masses.

"We must pay careful attention to the voice of the masses, to the voice of the rank-and-file member of the Party, to the voice of the so-called 'small men', to the voice of the people."¹

¹ *Daily Worker*, April 2nd, 1937.

CHAPTER X

THE POWER OF THE SPOKEN WORD

IN THIS CHAPTER I propose to extend the foregoing examination of the means by which Fascism gains its hold over the minds of masses of people. These means are best exemplified in the propaganda technique of the German Nazis and we shall, therefore, devote the greater part of our attention to the rise of Adolf Hitler.

The success of Fascism in Germany has overshadowed, in importance, its counterpart in Italy. For the experiences of Germany have established a very unpalatable fact. They have demonstrated that Fascist propaganda does not only succeed in a backward, mainly agrarian country where it finds suitable soil in the general illiteracy of the masses. The masses, in highly industrialised Germany, with a level of education and traditions of struggle probably superior to that of any other country, likewise fell victim to the glib-tongued Fascist propagandists.

In Germany, Fascism undoubtedly had a more difficult task. It had to compete with the powerful Social Democrat and Communist parties on the Left, as well as with other National parties on the Right. Only by remarkable skill in propaganda, and deep insight into the psychology of the masses, could German Fascism have made the impression it did. For only because it convinced the ruling class that it had these abilities to control the psychological life of the masses, did it become the political weapon of the ruling class. This is a fact of great importance in understanding why Fascism becomes adopted by the ruling class. To it we shall return in more detail in a consideration of the Fascist State theory.

The leader of German Fascism, Adolf Hitler, has often been reviled as an illiterate clown, a mediocrity, who, by some prank of history, has been given the leading rôle in

German political life to-day. His autobiography, in which he expounds his views on a wide number of subjects, has been contemptuously dismissed as a monument of incredible nonsense, a wordy effusion whose tangled and tortuous sentences indicate the mental chaos of the author. Such criticisms may be of considerable psychological value to the person making them. They may act as a consolation for the depressing fact that the one world theory which can really guide the masses to happiness and security is suffering temporary eclipse in the country whence it sprang. But whoever thinks that he has explained Hitler's rise to power by demonstrating the absurdity of his propaganda and the stupidity of the masses, is seriously at fault. In so contemptuously dismissing the methods of his opponents, he is considerably underestimating their real strength. For while, objectively, the propaganda of the Fascists may be shown to be a collection of lies, exaggerations, half-truths and sheer illiteracy, this propaganda, nevertheless, has been cunningly woven so as to make a strong psychological appeal. A perusal of *Mein Kampf* even in the bowdlerised edition as offered to the English public, shows that Hitler has a remarkably keen insight into the facts of human psychology.

Consider, for example, the following comments on the rôle of the orator:

"Supposing that an orator observes that his hearers do not understand him, he will make his explanations so elementary and clear that every single one must take it in; if he feels that they are incapable of following him, he will build up his ideas carefully and slowly until the weakest member has caught up; again, when once he senses that they seem not to be convinced that he is correct in his arguments, he will repeat them over and over again with fresh illustrations and himself state their unspoken objections; he will continue thus until the last group of the opposition show him by their behaviour and play of expression that they have capitulated to his demonstration of the case." Hitler then goes on to show that he correctly

assesses the obstructive force of unconscious prejudice and sentiment; he realises that the opposition to an idea which is due to unconscious causes cannot be removed merely by tactful argumentation. He knows exactly how to exploit these "hidden forces". He knows that in order to win them over, they must be directly appealed to and not combated. He says: "Not infrequently it is a case of overcoming prejudices which do not come from their understanding but are mainly unconscious and supported by sentiment. It is a thousand times harder to overcome this barrier of instinctive repulsion, sentimental hatred and negative bias than to set straight opinions founded on incorrect or mistaken knowledge. Ignorance and false conceptions may be removed by teaching—obstruction due to false sentiment never can. *Nothing but an appeal to these hidden forces can succeed here.*"¹

We may say that the keynote to the understanding of Fascist demagogic technique is the skill with which appeals to "hidden forces" are conducted. The object of propaganda, for Hitler, is the winning over of the "primitive sentiments" of the masses. Propaganda, he says, "should be framed to win the mass of the people"; it should be "popular and should adapt its intellectual level to the receptive ability of the least intellectual of those whom it is desired to address". "In a large popular assemblage the most effective speaker is not he who resembles the educated section of his audience, but he who captures the heart of the crowd."² And what Hitler means by "winning the heart of the crowd" is to be an adept at misleading them. For, in the earlier editions of *Mein Kampf*, but now expunged from later editions, he declares that the "German has not the slightest notion of how a people must be misled if the adherence of the masses is to be sought".

To mislead the German people is the whole purpose of Hitler's demagoguery. With acute psychological insight, he realises that this can best be done, not by brilliant, archi-

¹ *My Struggle* (English Edition).

² *ibid.*, p. 136.

tectonic literary effusions, which seek to persuade by the beauty of their construction and the immaculateness of their logic. The art of misleading the people is to stir them from the depths of their emotional life, to awaken fundamental emotional reflexes which are unresponsive to the ordinary processes of gentle persuasion. Hitler has discovered that these effects can best be produced by the art of oratory. The spoken word is, for him, more powerful than the pen.

In this connection, his appreciation of the skill of Lloyd George is of interest. He once read an article which examined certain of Lloyd George's war-time speeches "as under a microscope". This logical scrutiny produced the opinion that the speeches showed "inferiority of intellect and knowledge, and were otherwise banal and commonplace". "I obtained some of these speeches bound in a small volume," says Hitler, "and had to laugh out loud at the thought that an ordinary German quill-driver failed to see the point of those psychological masterpieces in the way of influencing the public. The fellow judged the speeches solely by the impression they made on his blasé intellect, whereas the great British demagogue had been able to produce an immense effect by their aid on the whole of the British lower classes. From this point of view, that Welshman's speeches were most wonderful achievements, for they evinced amazing knowledge of the mentality of the populace; their penetrative effect was decisive in the truest sense."¹

In choosing oratory as the essential channel for his propaganda, Hitler relieved himself of any necessity to give a general consistency to that propaganda. For the masses "have a great power of forgetting", he observes. Consequently he need only thunder forth the slogan which seems most appropriate for the time and place of his meeting, confident that the content of his speech will soon be forgotten. But he will, none the less, have left an emotional impression which will last some considerable time

¹ *My Struggle*, (English Edition), p. 191.

after his actual words have been forgotten. For it is a well-known psychological fact that one may remember nothing of a great orator's speech, yet retain a vivid impression that what he said was of extreme moment. The personality of the orator, in other words, has obtruded itself into our mind. His voice and gestures have conveyed an emotional message which cannot be rendered in mere words. By subtle vocal inflexion, and calculated gestures, the audience is raised to the pitch of excitement desired by the orator. Particularly so, if this is an audience composed of tired working people who are not able to put forth the mental efforts required to follow a closely reasoned speech. And this is the sort of audience in which Hitler delights. For an agitator, he has observed, should only speak in the evenings. For then the audience is tired and its powers of resistance weakened.

Hitler's powers as an orator have been graphically described by Rudolf Olden, as follows:

"Hitler's way of speaking is an elemental phenomenon, one of Nature's marvels. Even those most remote from him, on whom all his eloquence is without effect, people whose only reaction is disgust, have admitted this. It is a phenomenon of massiveness. . . . It is a falling torrent, a phenomenon such as Nature, in all creation, has never before produced.

"Although, after a quarter of an hour, the speaker drips with perspiration, his collar reduced to a mere ribbon, and his hair hanging like a wet rag over his face, the public feels that he is capable of going on speaking for hours, for days. . . . Though this gigantic wealth of words may amaze his hearers, it is nevertheless not the decisive element. Sooner or later, the moment will come when the speaker is overcome by his own inspiration, and with a sobbing, screaming and gurgling, something unknown and undefinable breaks out of him. Should a man have remained unmoved up to this stage, now is the time when he becomes aware that before his very eyes there is occurring a manifestation of the unconscious; sense and nonsense

have become one, and he finds himself in the presence of an ineffable force of Nature. This is the moment when men break out in delirious applause, when women groan and feel the tender, painful ecstasy of passion. Those he cannot hypnotise go away nauseated, and never return. The others are his, body and soul. For them he is the redeemer, the national saviour."¹

There are some interesting psychological aspects to this power of oratory. They are related to the need for the protection of the father, which, as described in the previous chapter, gives the main psychological strength to demagoguery.

In the first place, the inflexions in his father's and mother's voices are the main indication to the child of their attitudes towards him. He detects, in the variations of their tones, the tender and caressing qualities of maternal love and the angry note of paternal authority. He is, as yet, unable to comprehend the whole content of their speech and must therefore be guided by the tones used. In the circumstances of infantile life, the voice thus possesses important psychological significance. It is the chief medium by which the love and authority of the parents is conveyed. When, therefore, the regression to an infantile level of psychological life takes place, as described in the preceding chapter, the individual reacts, as a child, to the magic influence of the voice. The orator attracts to himself the attitudes of infantile life. When he storms and raves, he is the father whose angry tones cowed the child into submission; and when his voice throbs with pathos and tenderness, the audience is transformed into the helpless, love-hungry children which they once were.

The orator is a father-substitute for the masses who listen to his voice. And just as the child accepts the superior wisdom of the parent as beyond question, so for those who fall under the spell of Adolf Hitler the contradictions which abound in his speeches leave their emotional allegiance to him undisturbed.

¹ Rudolf Olden, *Hitler the Pawn*, p. 108.

This, then, is the explanation of the enormous power which the orator, possessed of an insight into mass psychology, can wield. He knows that he can make the most outrageous and absurd statements without arousing overmuch dissent in his followers. For they are as uncritical and helpless before the flow of his oratory as children. Goebbels, for example, who almost rivals Hitler in the powers of oratory, has boasted that he can play on the German people's emotions, "as on a piano".

There is a further interesting aspect of this power of oratory which, while admittedly speculative, is worthy of note. Psycho-analysis has shown that speech is often a symbol, in dreams, for sexual powers. It has become associated in this way, because the child tends to identify the greater fluency of his father with his greater command over the affections of his mother. The child is excluded from much of the conversation of the parents. Indeed, at the stage where the child is able to understand many words, parents often spell them out to each other in order to mislead the child. Hence the ease with which the father converses with the mother is an evidence, to the childish mind, of his superior claims to the love of the mother. For the outcome of many of these mysterious conversations is more intimate relations between the parents. There is, therefore, an association between the mystery of these adult conversations and the secrecy of sexual intimacies which cannot fail to impress the childish mind. In both cases, the child is discouraged from asking too many questions, is put off with such banalities as "children should be seen and not heard". It is hardly surprising, in consequence, that psycho-analysts report that speech is a frequent symbol for sexual activities.

Hence we see that the power of oratory and the rôle of the father are correlated. The orator with his stream of words is once again, for the audience, the father with his marvellous sexual powers.

This is the explanation of the admiration which even the meanest of orators provokes. He is displaying his sexual

powers to an admiring audience whose inability to do likewise places them on an inferior level.

From the above we can see that the demagogue who deliberately sets out to play on the emotional lives of his audiences and avoids any intellectual appeal, has an enormous chance of winning a following. For the individual alone and in a mass meeting is hardly the same person.

It is a well-known fact that the individual in a crowd tends to lose the general intellectual and critical faculties which might ordinarily be his. This phenomenon has been variously described as the awakening of the "herd", "gregarious" and "mob" instinct. It is manifested when the restraints which the normal individual imposes on himself disappear in a wild frenzy of excitement. He cheers and shouts, perhaps throws his hat in the air, or alternatively boos his indignation, in a manner which should shock his rational self. A crowd, in other words, provides an outlet for his primitive repressed emotions.

The most adequate explanation of the phenomenon, it seems to me, does not lie in the postulation of some "herd instinct" which comes into being with the assembling of a crowd. It can best be explained in the terms used above, namely, the infantile situation wherein primitive emotions predominate. The members of a crowd become linked to one another by a common bond of love and hate for the orator, who becomes for them a father-substitute. The orator plays on these feelings of love and hate, skilfully attracting the love to himself by promising protection and directing the hate to others. Thus the German Nazis in all their propaganda promised the German people security while they found victims for the wrath of the masses in the Jews, foreigners, Socialists, etc.

This fact of the emotional regression to an infantile level which takes place in a crowd, is of extreme importance. Few people are immune from it to some degree or other. Everyone who has listened to a skilful orator must have found himself being affected more by his tone

than the substance of his speech. A remark which would look commonplace on paper uttered by an orator gains an emotional colouring by sheer tricks of vocal control. The success of the Nazi movement was largely due to the skilful exploitation of the mass-meeting by Hitler and other Fascist propagandists. At such meetings the Fascist propagandists repeated over and over again the slogans which had been carefully designed to give concrete expression to the inarticulate, but passionate, hopes and antagonisms of the masses. "Nothing is left to chance. Never was politician so contemptuous of the common people and never one studied them so carefully. His propagandists are instructed to the full in the effectiveness of catch-words repeated a thousand times: Third Empire, Germany, awake! Perish the Jew! the "System"; treaty of shame; Germany's bondage; tribute; November criminals; dictatorship; national pride; spirit of the front; voice of the blood; fundamental instinct; nordicising; stab in the back; un-German Marxism; red sub-humanity; red murder; party bonzes; ethics of pity; revenge; oppressors; hereditary enemy; heads will roll!

"If ever a single catch-word begins to go badly, it is cancelled from the orators' vocabulary. When a poster fails to work, it disappears overnight, although thousands have been pasted up throughout the country."¹

Hitler's keen assessment of the propaganda value of a phrase is shown in the title of the party. The *National Socialist German Workers' Party* enables an appeal to patriotic sentiments on the one hand, the national appeal; and an appeal to anti-capitalist revolt, on the other hand. Still more keenly did he grasp the tremendous emotional value of the Versailles Treaty. He saw in it a means by which the largely uncritical revolt of numbers of Germans against the terrible conditions of capitalism could be canalised. "How that instrument of unbounded exploitation and shameful humiliation could be made in the hands of a willing government a means of working up the national

¹ E. A. Mowrer *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, p. 269.

passion to fever heat!" he exclaimed. "How these sadistic cruelties could be utilised by an ingenious propaganda to rouse a people from indifference to indignation and from indignation to blazing fury . . . all printed matter from the child's primer to the last newspaper, every theatre, every cinema, every advertisement pillar, every hoarding, must be pressed into the service of this single great mission, until the anguished prayer of our confederated patriots, 'Lord, set us free!' is transformed in the brain of the tiniest child into the fervid prayer, 'Almighty God, bless our arms in the future; be just as Thou hast ever been, decide now whether we yet deserve freedom; Lord, bless our battles!'"¹

Thus we see that Hitler's propaganda was cunningly devised to strike to the emotional depths of the German people. He saw with a keen eye what hates and resentments lurked beneath the surface of the German mind. With unerring skill he tapped the emotional forces allied to these attitudes, and whipped the German people into an ecstasy of hate and violence.

There is, however, no reason to believe that Hitler understands the nature of the psychological forces which he has so successfully tapped. For him they are so many "prejudices", "sentiments" which the "obtuse" masses happen to possess and which, therefore, must be played upon. Because he does not understand the basic nature of those psychological forces which at present he is utilising, he is playing with fire. For he has assumed a rôle which he cannot adequately fulfil. He has undertaken to provide the German people with the protection and love which the oppressive conditions of capitalism have driven the German people to seek. But with the continuance of capitalism in its present Fascist guise, the misery and poverty of the masses must grow more intense. Hence the difficulties of their economic life which made them look to Hitler for succour, may equally spell his doom.

¹ *Mein Kampf*, pp. 714-5. Quoted by Robert Dell in *German Unmasked*.

But as we have noted before, it is a foolish optimism to count on a speedy disillusionment of this kind. While Hitler can pose as the iron and fearless leader, a pose made possible by the tacit acquiescence of capitalist governments in his brutalities, he can maintain his hold on the minds of his followers. His internal repressive policy and his blustering foreign policy form a composite picture of a stern, resourceful and determined figure whom nothing can deter in his march towards his goal. So long as he can maintain this pose he will have the confidence of a large section of the German people. And, as already pointed out, he can maintain this pose just so long as he can exploit the fears of the external capitalist world of the advent of a Communist revolution with his fall. Or, in other words, just so long as the outside world does not present a determined, united, anti-Fascist front.

To return to the power of the spoken word. The reason why Hitler places so great an importance upon it is clear enough. It enables him to dispense with logic and consistency in the presentation of his policy. For Fascist policy is completely at variance with the objective interests of the mass of the German people. Hence Hitler sees in oratory a form of propaganda whereby he can avoid arousing to any great extent the critical faculties of the people. In place of argument and reasoning he uses the method of positive affirmation, constant repetition of his points until they are driven home. As an orator it is not necessary for him to prove the guilt of the Jews. He merely asserts it and does this with such strong conviction and emotion as to overpower the critical faculties of his audiences. The slogans with which he covered the hoardings of Germany were designed along the best traditions of modern publicity. Just as, for example, no cigarette firm is concerned to prove that its products are the best, but just simply proclaims that they are, so the Fascist slogans assert, in bold, positive fashion, their points. And just as the cigarette firm that says most often and most emphatically that its cigarettes are the best will, in the

long run, have the largest sale, so the constant repetition of Fascist slogans produce their desired effect.

We do not need to explain at great length, therefore, why Hitler has chosen these methods of propaganda. The remoteness of his case from the real objective interests of the masses is sufficient reason. Nevertheless, if we are to combat this propaganda, we must understand the important emotional factors upon which it is based.

Socialists cannot, of course, make oratory their chief method of propaganda. The strength of their case lies in its basis in fact; its scientific character. It is of prime necessity that knowledge of Socialism be widespread. While we do not expect to make a majority of people fully conscious Socialists before society is reconstructed, without a goodly number of Socialists organised politically, Socialism is a futile hope. The task of a Socialist or Communist party is to make the most of the fact that its policy is scientifically grounded. At the same time, it cannot fail to recognise that a large part of the people whom it endeavours to lead will remain, at the best, vaguely anti-capitalistic. This was so in Germany, a fact that accounts for the anti-capitalist sentiments in which the Nazi orators indulged. While, then, the Socialist and Communist parties must endeavour to spread as much Socialist knowledge as possible, they must know how to prevent the Fascists exploiting the vaguely anti-capitalist sentiments of a large part of the people. We saw this necessity in relation to nationalism. The national sentiments of the people can be played upon by Fascist propagandists so that the hostility aroused by capitalist conditions is diverted to some foreign nation. In that case, we saw, it is necessary to encourage national sentiments to express themselves along channels of social reconstruction.

In this task of guiding subjective impulses along channels of social reconstruction, oratory and slogans assume some importance. For there can be no doubt that these methods do enable the expression of the objective interests of the

people in terms of their deepest emotional needs. This, we saw, was true of Lenin's slogan, "Peace, Bread and the Land". And to-day, when the spoken word is assuming predominant importance in the propaganda armoury of the capitalist class, it is all the more necessary to study its value for social reconstruction. To-day, millions can be reached by the wireless; it is possible to address many thousands of people at one meeting by means of the microphone; in the comfort of the cinema the unctuous tones of capitalist spokesmen may be assimilated.

These are stupendous developments in the technique of influencing the minds of the people. We Socialists and Communists cannot hope to compete with the extensiveness of the means of propaganda at the disposal of the capitalist class. But because we are scientific we can, if we desire, defeat them by the *quality* of our propaganda. A main purpose of our propaganda is to prevent capitalist exploitation of the emotional needs of the people. We must do this, first and foremost, by encouraging the reading of literature in which the basic teachings of Socialism are set out. We must also recognise the value of speeches and slogans for giving concrete expression, in terms of objective social and economic interests, to the deepest subjective needs of the people. But this entails a knowledge of these subjective factors. For we cannot just ignore them. If we do not study them we shall still deal with them but clumsily and unsuccessfully. We shall leave men's emotional life to be the prey of Fascist propaganda.

CHAPTER XI

HITLER'S GOD COMPLEX

OUR ACCOUNT, so far, has been mainly confined to elucidating the psychological factors in the mass of the people which respond to Fascist propaganda. We have ascribed such success as it has had to the fact that it awakens existing infantile psychological tendencies.

There remains to be considered those psychological factors in the leader or father-substitute which impel him to proclaim himself as the protector and deliverer of the masses of the people. Such people seem to have a fierce conviction that destiny has marked them out to play this rôle. Hitler, for example, relates two stories about himself which seem to show that he believes that a higher destiny is guiding his steps. "In a town in Central Germany in which he was to speak, his political opponents were planning to attack him. He came by car, but, by a misunderstanding, he was conveyed to the meeting-hall not by the guarded road but straight into a part of the town which was occupied by hostile crowds. The car drove towards a bridge before which his opponents were collected in dense throngs. It was no longer possible to turn round in the face of the enemy; the worst seemed to threaten. At this moment Hitler saw the crowd hurl itself on an individual who bore a certain resemblance to himself. Obviously they had mistaken this man for Hitler, and dragged him to the parapet of the bridge and flung him into the water. Hitler himself escaped in the general confusion."

The story is repeated here just as a serious and trustworthy witness heard it from Hitler's own lips. To this same witness he related: "I was seated over a meal at the Front with several comrades. Suddenly an inner voice bade me: 'Stand up and seat yourself at that spot over there!' I obeyed; the spot was about twenty yards distant.

Hardly had I reached it before a shell burst among my comrades. Not one escaped."¹

This last story illustrates Hitler's conception of his own importance as a man of destiny. The lives of other people are worthless compared to his. He has been chosen to do "God's work" and he has developed a Jehovah-like unconcern for the mutilations and deaths which his relentless pursuance of his path inflicts on others.

Only a man driven on by intense inner impulses could so completely disregard the sufferings caused to others. We are irresistibly impelled to ask, "What dark forces can they be which so distort a man's sense of his own and other people's value that, to fulfil his own purpose, he can contemplate the sacrifice of thousands?"

To attempt to analyse the psychological driving forces in the lives of such individuals brings us upon very uncertain ground. We are considering, now, phenomena which cannot easily be expressed in general terms. The number of people who seem possessed of these impulses to a high degree is too limited to permit of the same kind of broad generalisation as we employed in regard to those more universal infantile characteristics of dependence, etc., dealt with in preceding chapters. These latter characteristics can be discerned among the greater number of human beings, whereas there are few only who proclaim themselves as called upon to lead and deliver mankind. In other words, we are confronted with the unusual, the abnormal and the irregular.

The days when the abnormal in psychology was considered to be due to the invasion of a malevolent spirit are long past. Just as a physical illness is treated by medical science as an expression of bodily disharmony which can only be understood in terms of the normal functioning of bodily organs from which it has deviated, so too psychological abnormalities must be comprehended in the light of those normal² processes of which they are

¹ Konrad Heiden, *Hitler, a Biography*, pp. 343-4.

² The normal, in this sense, is that which is most general.

distortions, or exaggerations. To understand, therefore, the abnormalities of a self-styled saviour of mankind, we must seek those psychological processes whose normal expression is distorted out of all proportion.

In Chapter IX we described the complex character of the attitude of the child towards his father. The attitude was marked by a number of conflicting emotions and also by a tendency to identification with the father. This latter tendency, we saw, was instrumental in the formation of the child's super-ego, by which the rôle of the father was adopted within the mind. So far, we may say, these are tendencies, more or less general to all people. There is, of course, a variation of emphasis on each element involved which distinguishes one individual from another. But, in the majority of cases, the variations are not so great as to obscure the underlying factors general to all. Or, in other words, we can discern through all these variations some pattern of normality.

But there are circumstances which give one element undue stimulus so that it tends to assume preponderant place in the psychological structure of the individual. Let us make this clear by an analogous example. Sexual fixations arise from the fact that elements of the sexual instinct, which are normally subordinate to the act of intercourse, tend to dominate the sexual life of the individual. Thus it is quite normal for individuals to dress attractively, to make the most of their appearance as means of winning the regard of the opposite sex. Women, for example, try to enhance any physical attraction they may possess, their hair, their figure, etc. In other words, the exhibition of one's sexual charms is a normal and necessary part of courtship. It is a means to an end, it tends to lead to closer sexual intimacies and finally the sex act. But the individual who has become engrossed in self-display, who seems only concerned with provoking attention to his appearance, and is fully satisfied with admiration and flattery, has become dominated by this factor. It has become an end in itself, rather than a means to the

more intimate sexual relations. It, of course, varies in degree in different persons. Thus in a mild form it may be expressed in a tendency to pose, to flaunt one's abilities, to dress and behave eccentrically in order to compel attention. Public speakers, actors, people who strive to break records, and all those who live on public adulation, manifest, to some extent, this exhibitionist tendency. It plays a part in nudist cults and the attraction which uniforms have. In an extreme form it is manifested in those unfortunate beings who have uncontrollable impulses to display their sexual organs to women and children, as if to invite admiration and awe.

From this example we see how a normal factor in human psychology may assume a preponderant and so abnormal and decisive rôle. In a similar way we can discern a preponderating factor in the psychology of those would-be saviours of humanity. We shall note it, at first, in a stage where it has already assumed importance but not yet complete dominance.

This is a stage commonly manifested in religious people. The religious person has created a god after the image of his own father. Towards this divine father-substitute he then shows the attitudes of love and hate¹ which the

¹ It may be objected that the religious man loves his God and does not hate him. But this is only because he has divided the love and hate between a good father, in the shape of God, and a wicked father in the shape of the devil.

It is well known that originally the qualities of good and evil were indivisibly associated with one supernatural being. Some trace of this is in the common roots of words relating both to good and evil. In latin, for example, "sacer" is the root of both blessed and accursed. But a study of the Bible reveals more clearly than perhaps anything else the underlying identity between God and the Devil, as father-substitutes. There are several examples where an act, in one place attributed to God, is, in another place, attributed to the Devil. Thus in 2 Samuel xxiv. 1 God orders David to number Israel. In 1 Chronicles xxi we are told that Satan provoked David to number Israel. But the Bible would indeed make an interesting psycho-analytic study. For the contradictoriness of the divine qualities, the deep love and relentless cruelty, the everlasting mercy and consuming jealousy, and so forth, are eloquent of the ambivalent qualities which the father appears to the child to possess.

child feels towards his father. He also, as does the child, tends to identify himself with this father substitute.

With this process of identification we are, for the moment, particularly interested. It shows itself in the belief that there is a mystical unity between man and God, whereby man partakes of the divine nature. We can see the identification at work also in the religious ceremonials such as the Eucharist, wherein the body and blood of the God are symbolically devoured. In the Christian religion the unity of the individual and God is reached through the doctrine of the Son who is also God. The Son proclaims that he is the Father. "I and my father are one." Hence we may say that religion shows a tendency for the individual to identify himself with the infantile image of his father. And when this takes the extreme form of complete, although unconscious, identification, so that the individual feels possessed of superior powers and divineline attributes, he then manifests what Dr. Ernest Jones has called the God Complex. The possessor of this complex sometimes openly proclaims himself to be God, whereupon profane hands seize him and limit the exercise of his omnipotence to the confines of a lunatic asylum. On the other hand it may take a more subtle expression, one which takes sufficient cognisance of reality considerations to preserve the individual from such treatment. Thus the individual may proclaim himself to be an appointed leader; he will announce some divine mission, and at the worst be considered some kind of a crank. But when the individual is intelligent enough to associate himself with a movement which has real objective roots; a movement, that is to say, which expresses the economic and political interests of an influential group, he becomes an indescribable menace to mankind. He is unanswerable to no one;¹ no human standards can restrict his activities. The ordinary conceptions of truth and honour which may be prevailing

¹ Except, of course, his paymasters. But even to them he tends to assume the proportions of Frankenstein's monster, he is a risk which only the desperation of their political situation can persuade them to run.

at his time, do not apply to him. Such observances are for the ordinary run of mortals, not for him. Small wonder that German politicians have discovered to their cost that Hitler's promises and words of honour are worthless. One recollects his passionate avowal to Dr. Schweyer, the Minister of the Interior at the time, that never in his life, let alone in the immediate future, would he attempt a *putsch*. None-the-less, a few months later, he broke his word and began his inglorious *putsch* of November 1923. More recently he solemnly swore to President Hindenburg that whatever the results of the elections in March 1933 he would not alter the composition of the Cabinet in favour of the Nazi Party. This is reported by the author of the Berlin Diaries. "Meissner (the President's Secretary of State) assured me that Hitler had solemnly sworn to the President in the presence of witnesses that, in the event of new elections to the Reichstag, he would retain all the Ministers who are at present in the Cabinet, irrespective of the election results and the sentiments in the Nazi Party. And when I enquired whether Hindenburg and Meissner felt justified in attaching any importance to Hitler's word of honour, Meissner was very indignant." He, of course, used the terror elections of March 1933 to replace the most important ministers with his Nazi friends. How "important" Hitler's word of honour is, foreign statesmen are beginning to discover also.

We can see now what psychological factor has received exceptional emphasis in the case of these would-be deliverers of mankind. The tendency to identify oneself with one's father has been taken to extremes. Hitler and Mussolini have formed, in their unconscious minds, strong identifications between themselves and a magnified super-ego. The consequence is that they adopt the attitude towards the rest of their fellow-men of an almighty father whose will is law, and who can vouchsafe protection, only when implicitly obeyed. It is difficult to say what factors in either of their lives gave rise to this strong identification. No one can perform an analysis of the inner motives of a

man's life from the material available in biographical form. The most important details of an individual's life are often the least significant from the biographer's point of view. No biography that I have ever read has ever recounted, for example, the early reactions to the process of excretion of the individual concerned. Yet these reactions are much more important than his reactions to, for example, his school life. In fact the latter probably could never really be understood without knowledge of the former. What we know of Hitler and other Fascist leaders is the result of adult reflection on their own part in autobiographies, and observation of them as adults by keen-eyed politicians and journalists, who sometimes, indeed, reveal a psychological truth of great importance. Thus Rudolf Holden grasps the infantile roots of Hitler's psychology. He says, summing up his biographical account of Hitler, "He is a man who has remained at the child-stage, in the barbaric state of the nursery—a child whom an evil spirit has given the form and intellect of an adult. . . ." What were the experiences of his nursery days which laid the foundation for his later character formation? This we shall never know. (Unless, and this is unthinkable, Hitler overcomes his repugnance of the Jew Freud, and submits himself to a psycho-analysis!) We can, of course, conjecture from his own account of his relations to his father something of the rôle which the resultant super-ego played. But such conjecture, in my opinion, is fruitless. We merely know that his father was a petty official who liked to be master in his own house, and had married three times. The possibilities of a stern image of the father being formed in childhood seem to exist, but in no greater degree than for millions of other people who have not developed a God complex. Psycho-analysis reveals that very often some deeply buried event, which may even have existed only as a childish fantasy, may be responsible for the most astonishing peculiarities of later character. We are therefore not in a position to do more than recognise the existence of the God complex in Hitler. Its origin is lost in his childhood history.

Hitler seems to possess, to an extreme degree, all those qualities common to other Fascist leaders, and which are symptomatic of this complex. For this reason, it is convenient to make the following comparison with Hitler, as typical of Fascist leaders in general. It is a comparison between some well-known characteristics of Hitler, and an account of the peculiarities associated with the God complex, given by Dr. Ernest Jones. This latter account was published in the *International Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, in 1913, when Hitler was a brooding young man with just the faintest stirrings of destiny within him. Dr. Jones had made a study of a number of cases, and his account gives a composite picture of the chief characteristics which, to a greater or lesser extent, form part of the complex.

"The person," says Dr. Jones, "aims at wrapping himself in an impenetrable cloud of mystery and privacy. Even the most trivial pieces of information about himself, those which an ordinary man sees no object in keeping to himself, are invested with a sense of high importance and are parted with only under some pressure. . . . Thus he never spontaneously refers to his family, speaking of them reluctantly when any enquiries are made about them."

It is well known that Hitler's childhood is wrapped in obscurity. His own memoirs omit to mention the existence of every member of his family, and the number of times his father married. Even about his name there is a great deal of uncertainty. It seems to have been transformed from Schicklegruber to Hiedler and finally to Hitler. Every biographer has pronounced on the vagueness surrounding his origins. Thus Rudolf Olden says, "It is remarkable how vague and uncertain everything is that has been said and printed about Adolf Hitler's private history. From his very name downwards, nothing is certain—a great deal remains dark, and much has been intentionally obscured. As an historical source, his own memoirs are even less reliable than the general run of political polemics."¹

¹ *Hitler the Pawn*, p. 13.

The mystery about his birth naturally lends itself to legendary stories. As Dr. Jones says, he appears "not the same as other mortals, he is something apart and a certain distance must be preserved between him and them". Again Hitler tells how aloof he was from his workmates, when working as a builder's labourer. His accent was in comparison cultured and his manner restrained. He did not mix with them but "sat aside drinking my bottle of milk and carefully studied my new surroundings or contemplated my unhappy lot". His inaccessibility has now become a byword in the National Socialist Party. "Soon," says Rudolf Olden, "the Leader managed to envelop himself in a veil of mystery and to cast an intriguing darkness around his person. He could not see visitors. Hess, his private secretary, is sorry, but the Leader is working at a book on art. Sometimes, as Rohm complained, Hitler was not to be found. On one occasion, after endless trouble, one of the leaders contrived to get an interview. He had got as far as sitting with Hitler at a table in an inn, when suddenly Hitler disappeared and did not return."

"Very characteristic is a lengthy, involved and circuitous form of diction that at times becomes so turgid and obscure as to render it really impossible for the reader to discover what is meant. . . . The most important part is not written at all, but instead is constantly hinted at with repeated promises that it will be disclosed on a further occasion."

It is difficult to believe that the above does not directly refer to *Mein Kampf*. When Dr. Jones wrote it he could hardly have dreamt that it would describe so accurately a great deal of the political testament of a future dictator. Hitler's biographers assure us that the English rendering can give no idea of the execrable language in which much of *Mein Kampf* is written. We give a translation below which is typical of the befogging style which Hitler uses. "Protestantism in itself represents the considerations of Germanism better, as far as this lies based in its birth and later traditions altogether, but it fails at the moment when

this defence of national interests must take place in a domain which in general lines is either lacking in its conceptual world and traditional development or is simply rejected for one reason or another.”¹

And yet, as we have noticed, Hitler can express himself forcibly and clearly on the subject of propaganda. It apparently is the one subject which he understands thoroughly and on which he can express himself with confidence. For the confused and tangled sentences of the bulk of his book are evidences of a lack of confidence which underlies his identification with God. That there is a deep sense of inferiority for which this identification is an extreme attempt to compensate, we shall discuss later. We may note, however, some symptoms of this sense of inferiority. Dr. Jones says that there is an unwillingness to give advice “the responsibility being too great”. In other words there is a marked indecisiveness, a fact which all the biographers of Hitler agree upon. Even Rohm in his memoirs says, “I felt that in his seclusion he found it hard to reach decisions.”

There must be many a politician in Germany to-day who, when he read of Mr. Eden’s weary resignation to the fact that Hitler finds it difficult to give decisive replies, smiled sympathetically. Thus Mr. Eden said in the House of Commons, in connection with the questionnaire handed to the German Foreign Secretary on May 7th, 1936, “The British Ambassador in Berlin has already reminded the German Government on more than one occasion of the desire of the Government for an early reply. . . I am not prepared to ask for an answer any more.”

Another characteristic attitude is, says Dr. Jones, “towards judging”. “It is a double one, consisting of an alternation of extreme tolerance and extreme intolerance. The question of which of the two is shown seems to depend on whether the infringement to be judged is of their own will or merely that of other people. In the former case no punishment is too harsh for the offender.” This alternation

¹ R. Olden, *Hitler the Pawn*, p. 164.

of extreme tolerance and extreme intolerance is markedly shown by the change in Hitler's attitude towards the man who organised his Storm Troops, Ernst Rohm. So long as Rohm was obedient to Hitler's will his homo-sexual proclivities were regarded indulgently. "In the most generous way," says Göring, "the Leader has always forgiven the mistakes of his subordinates. . . . Each individual follower has the wonderful feeling of security that no intrigues, no gossip, no scandal can injure his reputation with the Leader."¹ But when Rohm's personal ambition began to assert itself, using the growing restlessness in the ranks of the S.A. at the non-fulfilment of the Socialist part of the National Socialist programmes, Hitler struck down his comrade-in-arms ruthlessly. And the reason given for this change of front in Hitler was his refusal to tolerate immorality within his ranks.

"One of the most distressing character-traits of the type under consideration is the attitude of disinclination towards the acceptance of new knowledge. This follows quite logically from the idea of omniscience, for anyone who already knows everything naturally cannot be taught anything new; still less can he admit that he has ever made a mistake in his knowledge." Compare this with Hitler's proud boast that since 1914 he has not changed his personal views. "I studied the aims, the struggles and the success of Bismarck's special legislation (against Socialism). My study gradually gave me principles of granite for my own convictions—so much so that since then I have never had to think of changing my personal views on the question." This is a confession that having decided early in life to oppose Marxism, Hitler then closed his mind to all contrary ideas. The post-war struggles for Socialism, the German revolution of 1918, the success of the Russian revolution, were all unavailing to shake his "granite principles". To have wavered would have meant, at the same time, denying the feeling of omniscience which forms part of his identification with God.

¹ *Germany Reborn*, p. 83.

A final and very significant feature of this complex may now be given. "An obvious consideration, and one important not to forget, is the fact that all gods have not the same attributes . . . so that the God-type will vary according to the particular god with whom the person identifies himself. By far the most important of these variations is that depending on the idea of the Son of God, therefore in Europe of Christ . . . Saving fantasies where what is to be saved from the 'wicked father' varies from a given person . . . to the whole of mankind . . . are thus extremely common here. . . . There is thus constantly present an intolerance of authority of any kind, and any person invested with this, or even only with seniority or pre-eminence, may be viewed in the light of this complex so that his figure is artificially distorted into the image of the wicked father. *With this Christ-type there invariably goes also an anti-semitic tendency. . . .*" With anti-semitism we shall deal later. The above, however, gives an important clue to the personal motives involved in Hitler's anti-semitism. The Jew is for Hitler the "wicked father" from whom Hitler has been appointed to save the whole of mankind. We have already mentioned the tendency for the ambivalent characteristics of the father to be displaced, in religion, on to separate beings, namely God and the Devil. Hitler has identified himself, in his unconscious mind with God, and the Jews, with the forces of evil, the Devil. He thus feels that, in combating the Jews, he is saving humanity from evil. This saving fantasy on the part of Hitler is fanatically expressed in his autobiography, in the following sentences: "If the Jew, with the help of his Marxian creed, conquers the nations of this world, his crown will be the funeral wreath of the human race, and the planet will drive through the ether once again empty of mankind as it did millions of years ago.

"Eternal nature takes inexorable revenge on any usurpation of her realm.

"Thus did I now believe that I must act in the sense of

the Almighty Creator. By fighting against the Jews I am doing the Lord's work."

These few examples show that the main psychological impulses in Hitler's mind would appear to derive from the God-complex. This complex, we have seen, is the product of an almost complete identification with the magnified conception of the father held by the infantile mind. This magnified conception of the father gives the psychological basis for a belief in God. God is the father projected by the mind, from whom the human-being seeks guidance and protection. But Hitler differs from the religious individual in this important respect. He has identified himself completely with this magnified father. He is his father. He is God. That such types exist is very well known. In a form of insanity the sufferer openly proclaims himself to be God. But the expression of this identification with God does not always take this obvious character. Very often it can only be discerned with difficulty, so varied are the transformations which an unconscious complex may undergo in consciousness. "In a state of sanity," says Dr. Jones, "that is to say, when the feeling for reality and the normal inhibitions of consciousness are operative the phantasy can express itself only after passage through this censorship, and therefore only in a modified, weakened and indirect form." None-the-less, the operation of this complex seems astonishingly well marked in the case of Hitler.

When, however, we turn to the other Fascist leader, Mussolini, we find matters are much more difficult. Mussolini is a far more intellectual type than Hitler and has a far greater control over his emotional life. There is less of the hysterical about him. He is widely read and has a considerable knowledge of Socialist theory. He is able, in consequence, to give his unconscious compulsions a more rational expression which more effectively conceals their essential character. None-the-less, in his case also, we can detect some signs of an identification with God. Mussolini believes, as do all those who have unconsciously

identified themselves with God, that destiny has marked him out for her own. He has been chosen by some inscrutable fate to play the rôle of leader. To Emil Ludwig, the famous biographer, he described his feelings concerning his destiny in the following words: "... when I was a builder's labourer I had to carry a hod up two storeys one hundred and twenty times a day. Yet even then I had an obscure conviction that I was only being schooled for what was to come."¹ Again: "In all that I did, and still more in all that I suffered, I had a definite foreboding that I was being trained for a more important position."² These "obscure" convictions, whence do they proceed? Clearly they refer to unconscious impulses impelling the individual onwards in his ambition for power. The individual who has unconsciously identified himself with his father feels that he is born to command, to power, to be a leader among men. Mussolini makes a strange confession in his preface to his official biography by Margherita G. Sarfatti: "I have sometimes meditated," he says, "upon the fate grotesque and sublime of the public man. . . . The public man is born 'public'—he bears the stigma from his birth. He is a pathological case. You are born a public man as you are born 'normal' or 'mentally deficient'. . . . The public man like the poet is born to his doom. He can never escape it. His tragedy is one of infinite range. . . ." This, in a way, is a remarkable piece of insight into his own psychology. For it is a recognition of the pathological nature of the "obscure" impulses which have driven him onwards.

Mussolini, however, is an instance where the remarkable drive for power involved in the identification with God might conceivably have been used for Socialist ends. The bitterness with which he left the Italian Socialists is strongly expressed in his parting remarks:

"To-day if you hate me," he cried, "because in your heart of hearts you love me still. . . . But you have not seen the last of me! Twelve years of my party life are, or ought

¹ *Talks with Mussolini*, p. 44.

² *ibid.*, p. 54.

to be, a sufficient guarantee of my faith in Socialism. Socialism is something which takes root in the heart. But I tell you that from now onwards I shall never forgive nor have pity on anyone who in this momentous hour does not speak his mind for fear of being hissed or shouted down. . . . Do not think that by taking away my membership card you will be taking away my faith in the cause, or that you will prevent my still working for Socialism and revolution."

According to Margherita G. Sarfatti both Lenin and Trotsky regarded the loss of Mussolini a tremendous one for the Italian Socialists. Lenin observed to a deputation of Italian Socialists who visited Russia in 1919: "Mussolini? A great pity he is lost to us! He is a strong man, who would have led our party to victory." Trotsky's remarks were even more emphatic. "You have lost your trump card," he declared, "the only man who could have carried through a revolution was Mussolini." It is idle to speculate as to the psychological causes which led to his breach with the Socialists. The fact remains that the energies of this forceful, energetic individual passed from the camp of revolution to the camp of reaction. For us it is an instructive lesson that the psychological impulses which may well be used for revolutionary purposes may equally well be used for reactionary purposes. But to discuss this further is outside the scope of this chapter. To it we shall return in our study of Trotsky and Trotskyism. Here I may note that Mussolini's attitude to Russia, as revealed in his talks with Ludwig, shows a reluctant admiration and barely concealed envy. "When I was in Moscow recently," observed Ludwig, "I was struck by two things in almost everyone I met—work and hope. Is it the same here?"

"Much the same," replied Mussolini, "*but here we cannot find work for everybody.*" Apart from the fact that this reply sums up the difference between the illusory hopes of Fascism and the real hopes of Socialism, one can also detect a shade of regret. From contemplating the poverty in his own country, Mussolini, renegade Socialist, derives

a vicarious kind of satisfaction from the reflection that his prophecy regarding the Soviet Union is being fulfilled. When reminded by Ludwig that, in 1919 or 1920, he foretold that Russia would become the most productive in all the world, he retorted, "Is not my prophecy already on the way to being fulfilled?"¹ What must be the inward thoughts of a one-time revolutionary who has to contemplate the successes of the first Socialist revolution from his self-built reactionary prison?

Perhaps we can gain some idea of his feelings from his confession to Emil Ludwig that he has a great contempt for his fellow-men. "I haven't a friend. And I cannot have one. First because of my temperament and secondly because of the opinion I hold of my fellow-men." Is this contempt for others an indication of self-contempt, an inward despicability of his own rôle? The projection, or displacement on to others of one's own unworthy feelings, is a familiar fact of psychology. It is responsible for the man with dishonest tendencies regarding others with suspicion. It is a means therefore of ridding oneself of an intolerable feeling of guilt. May we not see in Mussolini's confession of contempt for humanity, a confession of his own inner feelings of unworthiness? And as we shall now see, the intense drive for personal power in those who have unconsciously identified themselves with the magnified image of their father is an attempt to compensate for acute feelings of personal inferiority. For to be impelled to make so complete an identification with one's father must mean that one feels unbearably helpless without him. Such an intense feeling can only be overcome by this identification. For then the superior strength of the father takes the place of the childish weaknesses and fears that are at the root of the inferiority. Hence we can regard the powerful ambitions of the Fascist dictators as evidences of acute feelings of inferiority.

Such an acute feeling of inferiority, sometimes called the *inferiority complex*, arises from a condition of inferiority

¹ *Talks with Mussolini*, p. 150

or inadequacy common to all people during childhood. This normal inferiority is a reflection of the general helplessness of childhood, the dependence, which we have already observed, of the child upon the adults. There is a tendency for this general inferiority to crystallise around some specific inferiority. Thus an organic inferiority, such as defective sight or hearing, may well become the focal point for the crystallisation of a sense of inferiority. Likewise an incident in the child's life which has emphasised his weakness and helplessness may accentuate a particular inferiority. For example, a child who has been lost, who is neglected for the sake of another child, who is overshadowed by an older child, or who has been required to perform some task beyond his abilities, might find some element in those situations which provides a specific form for his inferiority feelings. To overcome these feelings, the child unconsciously strives to achieve some goal, some aim in life which, in the consequent sense of achievement, compensates for the feelings of inferiority. The ordinary individual finds little difficulty, in adult life, in overcoming the inferiority feelings of childhood. In his work, his sex life, his general social relationships, he discovers a milieu into which he more or less, comfortably fits. He does not feel odd or exceptional and readily intermingles with his fellow-creatures. But, in some individuals, the sense of inferiority pervades their whole life. They are acutely aware of their differences from others, are prey to numerous nameless fears, are awkward and abashed in society, etc. In consequence, their drive to achievement tends to be stronger. They not only have to convince others of their worthiness but, above all, they have to convince themselves. That is why, in this task, they need the aid of their father; they need, that is to say, to make the identification with the infantile conception of the father held by their minds. When this identification has been accomplished the demeanour of the individual is transformed. He is no longer a weak, undecided individual in his external appearance. He adopts a truculent and

boastful manner. This is the bold front with which he attempts to hide his inner inferiority feelings, a continual outward assertion of his value in order to convince the world and particularly himself. One has only to look at the photographs of both Hitler and Mussolini to detect in the tense, menacing scowl which they assume the challenge of inner inferiority. It is interesting to compare pictures of Hitler and Mussolini with those of, say, Lenin and Stalin. In the one instance we have the features of men whose real, social achievements are nil, whose contributions to society have, in fact, been harmful to a grave degree. Such men, with no objective achievements to assure them of their greatness, need to reassure themselves somehow, of their worth. They do so by an outward display, by distorting their features into what they feel to be stern and forceful looks. They love brilliant uniforms, splendid titles, and so forth. What a different story do the pictures of Lenin and Stalin tell. Before me there is a picture of Lenin seated at his desk. His face is calm and studious. There is nothing exceptional about the photograph, nothing to indicate that it is of a man who has played so vital a part in social progress. Another photograph, of Stalin. Dressed in an old army coat, from which a button is missing, a half smile on his face, the leader of the world Communist movement, needs none of the pose and pretence of Hitler and Mussolini. Nor is it difficult to understand why. These men have real, objective achievements to their credit. Lenin saw, and Stalin still sees, a new world growing up as a result of their efforts. They can have none of the feelings of deep inferiority which impel Hitler and Mussolini onwards, for every day brings its fresh confirmation of the rightness of their policies and the magnitude of their achievements.¹

¹ Emil Ludwig, who has interviewed most of the prominent figures in European politics, strikingly reveals the difference between Stalin and the other leading European figures. This difference is all the more interesting since Ludwig has no conception of the political rôle these men are playing. For him one dictator is very much like another dictator, a strong man "making history". Yet this lack of political

According to Freud, these feelings of inferiority are due to the lack of love in the life of the child. It feels unable to excite a love response from its parents and grows up with an inability to make satisfactory adjustments in its sexual life. Why this is so, of course, depends upon individual circumstances which are not easily discovered. But we can detect the symptoms of it in adult life. Thus, to turn to Hitler, there are extraordinary evidences that his sex life is an ill-balanced one. He has an exaggerated fear, for example, of syphilis, which points to a morbid preoccupation with the sexual act and its probable results. One of Hitler's biographers, Konrad Heiden, calls attention to this exaggerated fear of syphilis from which Hitler suffers. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler declares that "all the resources of propaganda should be utilised for the purpose of representing the campaign against syphilis as the task of the

approach cannot prevent Ludwig noting certain differences in attitudes which can only be explained by reference to the political rôles played by these men. He says of Stalin, "I had never before experienced the same kind of self-confidence." "I found myself *for the first time*, face to face with a dictator to whose care I would readily entrust the education of my children." (*Leaders of Europe*, p. 372. My italics.) In contrast to Mussolini's contempt for the masses Stalin expressed his life's work as follows, "My life's task is to lift up the working classes to another level, not the consolidation of a national State but of a Socialist one which will guard the interests of all the workers of the world. If each step in my career did not lead towards the consolidation of this State I should look upon my life as having been lived in vain." (*ibid.*, p. 353.) The objectivity of Stalin's outlook is shown in his contemptuous dismissal of a higher destiny guiding his steps. Unlike Mussolini and Hitler he does not need to evoke destiny as the explanation of his leadership. He can find justification for his rôle in the objective achievements of Socialism. ("In general," said Stalin, "it can be said that great men are of value only in so far as they are able to deal with the circumstances of their environment.") His greatness is due to the way in which he fulfils the objective needs of social progress. In contrast, Mussolini and Hitler can find no such objective justification for their rôles. They must, however, find some justification. And as they cannot find it in the objective world, they seek it within. They find it in Destiny. Destiny has chosen them for its own. This is the difference between the Socialist leader and the Fascist leader. The one must justify himself in actual, objective achievements. The other must find a mystical justification in the workings of destiny.

nation—not *a* task, but *the* task. For this purpose every means should be employed to bring home to the people the terrible calamity it represents and the full extent of the injury it causes, until the whole nation has arrived at the conviction that on the solution of this question everything really depends—future or downfall.”¹ On this Heiden tersely comments, “The whole nation a spiritual syphilis hospital! This is obviously the fantasy of a person suffering from over-excitement.”

It is no wonder that Hitler hurls the threat of sterilisation at the Jews. Rudolf Olden observes, “his hatred for Jews is unmistakably of sexual origin. He shudders when ‘a nomad in evening dress’ gets near a Christian girl. He discovered a peculiarly close ‘connection of Judaism with prostitution and, even more, with the traffic in women’. He tells us: ‘When I for the first time recognised the Jew as the cold and businesslike manager of this horrifying traffic in vice among the dregs of the city, a cold shudder ran down my back. But then things flamed up inside me. Now I no longer tried to avoid discussion of the Jewish question; no, I was eager for it.’”²

Of significance also is the account which Konrad Heiden gives of Hitler’s relations with women. He has had a number of love affairs which have all ended in a similar way. They have all ended suddenly and it has invariably not been Hitler who has broken the relationship. He seems unable to gain any lasting satisfaction from any one relationship, and feels impelled to seek constantly for new loves. And while he is in love with a woman it takes the form of an extreme enslavement to her. This “exaggerated desire to be loved” Dr. Jones noted in connection with the God-complex.

The nature of Hitler’s relations with women has been established, says Heiden, by documentary evidence, to be “peculiar”. According to him the Reich Treasurer of the party, Franz Schwarz, has had to rescue Hitler

¹ Konrad Heiden, *Hitler*, p. 347.

² *Hitler the Pawn*, p. 61.

from the clutches of blackmailers because of these relationships. That this is not an exaggerated matter is vouched for by an event which occurred in 1930. Then his niece, for whom he entertained a fondness at the time and who regarded him with hero-worship, suddenly committed suicide. She had suffered a terrible disillusionment of some kind.

When we turn to Mussolini, however, we find greater difficulty in detecting the roots of his feeling of sexual inferiority. Some indication may be gained from his conversations with Emil Ludwig already quoted. Ludwig avowed that Mussolini's mien was, on the whole, calm and self-possessed, but certain questions evoked terrific emotional outbursts. And they are questions relating to sexual activities and women. ". . . I find it difficult to understand," observed Ludwig, "why, in a comparatively small and thickly populated country, you lay so much stress upon the multiplication of births. I should have thought that Malthusianism was more necessary in Italy than anywhere else in the world."

Mussolini suddenly flamed up in wrath. Never before or afterwards did I see him lose his self-command in this way. Speaking twice as fast as usual, he flung his arguments at me like missiles. "Malthus! Economically, Malthusianism is a blunder, and morally it is a crime! . . . When the population of Italy was only sixteen millions the country was poorer than it is to-day when we have forty-two million inhabitants. . . . Thirty years ago I came to realise that in my own home!" Here we have a mixture of economic and moral arguments. As to which predominate in determining Mussolini's attitude towards birth-control, the loss of self-control leaves no doubt. The "moral" objection to a rational use of birth-control, when it takes a violent and extreme form, would be interpreted by a psycho-analyst as a reaction to an unconscious fear of losing one's own sexual powers, of castration. For castration is the most complete form of birth-control there is.

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Continuing the conversation, Ludwig remarked, "Here I am on the side of the Russians. Among them, women and men have an equal standing in public life." This remark only made matters worse. He remarked more stubbornly than ever:

"Woman must play a passive part. She is analytical, not synthetical. During all the centuries of civilisation has there ever been a woman architect? Ask her to build you a mere hut, not even a temple; she cannot do it. . . . Of course I do not want women to be slaves, but if in Italy I proposed to give our women votes they would laugh me to scorn. As far as political life is concerned they do not count here. . . ." ¹

This emphasis on the inferiority of women is, simultaneously, an emphasis on the superiority of masculinity. To vaunt one's masculinity, to relegate women to a passive rôle, to deny them political rights, is to show that, inwardly, one fears the assumption of equal status by women. In other words, one is not so convinced as one maintains of masculine superiority. Hence Mussolini, in his attitude towards women, betrays his deep feelings of sexual inferiority.

This attempt to trace the psychological factors responsible for the powerful ambitions of the Fascist leaders is necessarily of a tentative nature. We know too little about their lives, the intimate details of which they themselves have probably long "forgotten". For psycho-analysis has shown that it is often the long forgotten episodes of the nursery which have set the future trend of character. But these incidents are only forgotten in the sense that they are no longer conscious. They remain active and influence conscious behaviour so that no understanding of the individual's behaviour is possible in full detail, without the revelation of these unconscious experiences. Never the less certain tricks of conscious behaviour can often be detected as proceeding from an unconscious source. Psycho-analysis of a number of cases

¹ *Talks with Mussolini*, p. 168.

does reveal a certain uniformity in conscious behaviour owing to similar unconscious factors. This is true of the feeling that one is God, and has enabled us to apply the clinical discoveries of Dr. Jones to both Hitler and Mussolini. But there is always a core of mental life which defies reduction to formula. We can observe the things which Hitler and Mussolini have in common with other individuals with a like psychological constitution. But there probably is much which defies our analysis, much which remains peculiarly Hitler and Mussolini.

CHAPTER XII

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF ANTI-SEMITISM

WE HAVE SEEN that an important purpose of Fascist propaganda is to divert the aggressive impulses of the mass of the people from venting themselves on the ruling class. This is the supreme service that the Fascists render the ruling class. When economic distress is beginning to have its repercussion on the minds of the masses, so that their growing resentment and hostility threaten the existence of capitalism, Fascist propaganda provides the one remaining resource of the governing class. This, we saw, was the rôle of Fascist nationalism. By its means the hostility of the workers was directed towards the enemy beyond the shores, while the real enemy, the native capitalist exploiters, remained undisturbed.

Modern anti-semitism is essentially a variant of this aggressive nationalist propaganda. It serves the same purpose of diverting the aggression of the masses which has been stimulated by prolonged economic distress. But, from the point of view of Fascist propaganda, it has certain distinct advantages. The Jew lives within the country and is therefore easily got at. And as he is unarmed and therefore unable to retaliate, anti-semitism is at once the most convenient and the most cowardly form of propaganda designed to sidetrack the popular aggression that a ruling class can use. The attitude of the Fascist leaders to anti-semitism has been aptly summed up as follows: "We are not yet ready to beat the French, Poles and Danes on the outside. We have to give the Storm Troops something to beat, so we'll give them the Jews inside Germany."¹

The historian of the British Fascists also inadvertently exposes the real reasons for anti-semitism in Germany:

¹ Johannes Steel, *Hitler as Frankenstein*, p. 110.

the Nazis," he writes, "can only turn upon the nearest aliens in the streets to find consolation for the past and assurance for the future."¹

This, indeed, is a genteel commentary on the revolting anti-semitic atrocities which have occurred in Germany. A "consolation" by which the national pride may be restored. The Jews are offered as a scapegoat for the anger and resentment which defeat and economic distress have stored up. And when a "strong and really passionate nationalism", which Drennan tells us "is the spiritual background of Fascism", has been aroused, then the Fascists will turn from "the nearest aliens in the streets" to the aliens further afield, beyond the frontiers (including Mr. James Drennan).

The diversion of popular aggression towards the Jews is aided, to some extent, by the economic rôle played by the Jews. It will help us, therefore, to understand the psychological significance of anti-semitism if we briefly consider this economic rôle.

From the economic point of view the Jewish problem is largely a middle-class one.

The development of capitalism has meant that the small owners, merchants, handicraftsmen, who belonged to the old middle class, have been slowly but surely crushed out of existence. This has resulted from the ever-growing complexity and efficiency of large-scale technique which has enabled the flooding of the markets with cheap goods, outcompeting those of the small producers. But as the old middle-class disappears a new one is born. For capitalism, in its ever-growing complexity, requires a body of managerial, technical and salaried officials, bureaucrats, accountants, lawyers, etc. These form the backbone of the new professional middle class. While capitalism was expanding, the supply of members for this new middle class was readily absorbed in the ramifications of capitalism. But, to-day, capitalism is on the decline. It can no longer use to anything like a full extent the productive forces at

¹ James Drennan, *B.U.F.*, p. 221.

its disposal. Factories stand idle, unemployment grows among the workers. Inevitably there comes a decline in the demand for the services of the professional class. Stagnation in industry can only mean that the non-productive spheres of activity must also stagnate, for the latter derive to a great extent from the organisational needs of the former. Thus people who have considered their positions secure, have found, with the decline of capitalism, the stability of their lives rudely shaken. They have discovered, when forced into the markets to seek re-employment, that there has been a steady stream of young men and women, pouring out from colleges, universities, technical schools, etc., whose services a declining capitalism is unable to use. Thus the middle class finds itself plunged into a bitter competitive struggle for jobs.

In Germany this struggle was particularly intense. The desperation of the situation had been enhanced by financial crises, by inflation, which had wiped out the savings of many middle-class individuals, leaving them defenceless before the threat of unemployment. The consequent bitterness and discontent provided a fruitful soil for the dissemination of anti-semitic propaganda. The Jews who, in the old middle class, were mainly merchants and small producers were welcomed when the new middle class grew with the growing complexity and expansion of capitalism. But with the bitter competition for middle-class jobs, and the general overcrowding of the professional markets, the non-Jew could not but be aware that many lucrative positions were in the hands of Jews. Undoubtedly in Germany the Jews were sufficiently well represented in the professions to make them the object of envy. According to one estimate, three months after the establishment of the Hitler Government, 8,000 Jewish lawyers, judges and notaries public had been dismissed.¹ "The highest Jewish percentage was among the lawyers, where it was 16.25; among the doctors, 10.88; among State-appointed lawyers (judges, magistrates and prosecutors)

¹ Johannes Steel, *Hitler as Frankenstein*.

the percentage was 2.76. The percentage of Jews in universities was 2.64; among teachers in the elementary and secondary schools, 0.53. The figures given in the cultural field show a Jewish percentage among theatrical producers of 5.61, among actors and dancers, 3.00, musicians and singers, 2.04, booksellers, 2.5, painters and sculptors, 2.44, editors and authors, 5.05."¹

The above figures show that the Jews by no means monopolised the professions. But, undoubtedly, in proportion to their numbers among the population (roughly 1 per cent) the percentage is high.

From a rational standpoint this high percentage may be adduced as a testimony to the intellectual powers of the Jews. But from the standpoint of desperately placed middle-class people, seeking for a victim for their misfortunes, anti-Semitism opened up prospects of jobs at the expense of the Jews. In Germany, therefore, the economic plight of the middle class acted as a stimulus to anti-Semitism. This also tells us why anti-Semitism is not so acute a problem in Italy as in Germany. In Italy there is still room in the professional world for the few Jews who live there. Italy is not so highly commercialised and industrialised a country as Germany, with the consequence that the professional market is not glutted to the same extent.

We see, therefore, that the Jew is, for the middle class Gentile, the hated rival, the successful rival, whose job is coveted. Anti-Semitism is consequently an expression of the bitter and desperate struggle taking place in the middle class before the threat of destruction at the hands of capitalism. The middle class anti-Semite hopes to secure a new lease of life at the expense of his Jewish rival. But he cannot escape ultimately the pressure of capitalism. The percentage of jobs to be gained from Jews is far too small in comparison with the number of Gentiles clamouring for those jobs. A few may get jobs, but as Fascism fails to halt the decline of capitalist economy, the many will find that anti-Semitism does nothing to alleviate their desperate circumstances.

¹ *Wirtschaft und Statistik*, quoted in *The Yellow Spot*.

This, however, does not explain why anti-Semitism takes root among the workers. Only to a limited extent can they feel that the Jews have taken their jobs. For, in many industries and occupations, there are few Jews employed. On the other hand, where much Socialist and Communist propaganda has been done, as was the case in Germany, there exists a widespread, though often very confused, anti-capitalist feeling. It is this feeling which the Fascists seek to convert into anti-Semitism. For they seek to identify the Jews with the exploiters of the workers, who, they declare, are involved in a world plot to subjugate the non-Jewish peoples. Hence their tirades against international Jewish finance. For the worker, who has little knowledge of economics or politics, the "Jew" is a concrete term. It has more reality for him than the abstraction "capitalist class". A Jew is someone who can be placed. Mr. So-and-so is undoubtedly a Jew and he has a large store and a motor-car. On the other hand the capitalist class seems, in comparison, vague and indefinable. Who is a capitalist? What is a capitalist? These are questions which give rise to interminable arguments and are often answered by Socialists in abstract economic terms, with the explanation that individuals, as such, are not their main concern.¹

The Fascists, however, very readily supply personal and concrete details (but these Fascist facts are, of course, distortions or downright lies). On these lies an intensive, well-subsidised propaganda seeks to convert an inchoate, anti-capitalist feeling into anti-Semitism. All the troubles of the country are laid at the door of the Jews. "It is part of my genius," boasts Hitler, "to act as if the Jew were to blame for everything." The Jewish financiers and employers are declared responsible for economic distress. The nation is split, the Fascist continues, by the activities of Jewish Communists who are paid to foment disorder in the interests of a Jewish plot for world domination. The class war

¹ Compare this with the French Communist leader's concrete denunciation of the 200 French families who dominate France. (M. Thorez, *France To-day*, Gollancz.) Apparently we are learning.

is a means by which the vitality of the people is sapped. The Jew, according to Hitler, is on both sides at once. As Moses Cohen, the exploiter, he schemes in his office to intensify the exploitation of the workers. As Isaac Cohen, the agitator, he stirs up trouble against the rightful leaders of industry, the "productive" (i.e. Gentile) capitalists as distinct from the "usurious" (i.e. Jewish) capitalists.

This world plot for Jewish domination is expounded in the notorious "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion". This document has been proved a forgery,¹ fabricated by a Tsarist policeman. Here is an extract from these "Protocols" intended to show how the Jews were plotting, by means of the Press, to fan popular discontent to the point of a terrible crisis. "In the hands of the States of to-day there is a great force that creates the movement of thought in the people, and that is the Press. The part played by the Press is to keep pointing out requirements supposed to be indispensable, to give voice to the complaints of the people, to express and to create discontent. This discontent will be still further magnified by the effects of an economic crisis, which will stop dealing on the exchanges and bring industry to a standstill. *We shall create by all the methods open to us with the aid of gold, which is all in our hands, a universal economic crisis whereby we shall throw upon the streets whole mobs of workers simultaneously in all the countries of Europe.* These mobs will rush delightedly to shed the blood of those whom, in the simplicity of their ignorance, they have envied from their cradles, and whose property they will be able to loot. Ours, they will not touch, because the moment of attack will be known to us and we shall take measures to protect our own."²

Such are the economic factors involved in anti-Semitism. These are the factors which aid the diversion of popular aggression towards the Jews. Let us now consider the psychological meaning of anti-Semitism.

¹ The "Protocols" were exposed in three long articles in *The Times* of August 16th, 17th and 18th, 1921, afterwards published as a pamphlet, "The Truth about the Protocols."

² Quoted by M. Fry, *Hitler's Wonderland*.

Our psychological thesis is that the economic deprivations of capitalism keep alive men and women's unconscious aggression towards the authority in their childhood life, usually their father.

Anti-Semitism, psychologically considered, is the process of identifying the Jew with the hated father.¹ The resentments stored up as a result of infantile frustrations are poured out, in response to anti-Semitic propaganda, upon the Jews. They represent the hated father who has forcibly deprived the individual of the love of his mother and compels the mother to submit to his attentions. Can we not see, in the following description of the Jews which appeared in the most violent anti-Semitic paper, *The Sturmer*, precisely such a representation of the Jews? "The Jew," declared *The Sturmer*, "is the born ravisher of races. Criminal outcasts from the most desperate peoples came together in the desert under the leadership of the Lawgiver, Moses, and formed the Jewish people. Thus, out of the thousands of years of inbreeding, there developed the mongrel race of curs which we see before us in the contemporary Jews. This Jew is forced by his blood to ruin and to decompose all other races. He is driven by his blood and by his inborn abnormal sensuality to ravish non-Jewish women and girls." Thus the Jew is depicted as a kind of sexual monstrosity who forcibly ravishes non-Jewish women. In the same way, the child imagines that the father compels the mother to submit to his love-making. Hence we see that the Jews signify to the unconscious the hated father, and the psychological strength of anti-Semitic propaganda lies precisely in the fact that this propaganda arouses irrational and infantile aggression towards the Jews.

It is also of great significance that one of the threats hurled at the Jews is that of sterilisation. For the mind of the child is often greatly affected by a fear of castration at the hands of the father. This is a fear derived partly from threats that mothers and nurses make when the child, as is normal, begins to take interest in its sexual organ. But mainly the child develops this fear from the

¹ i.e. the hated side of the father. The father, we have seen, is both loved and hated.

obvious power possessed by the father to deprive him of any article with which the child may be playing. The father can take away a book, its toys, a forbidden article, such as a knife, with ease and in spite of the protests of the child. What is more natural than that the child should develop an anxiety, a fear, that the member of his body which his mother, nurse, relatives and all adults combine to prevent him playing with may one day be taken from him by his all-powerful parent? This fear of castration, of the loss of this treasured part of his body, plays an important part in compelling the repression of the hostility felt by the child towards his parents. He does so, in other words, to avoid the reprisals of his father in the form of castration.

When, therefore, the repressed hostility is allowed expression in the shape of anti-Semitism it is not surprising that sterilisation of the Jews plays a part. For this is a demand for the castration of the father, an act of revenge for all the frustrations of childhood life.

We must, however, distinguish between the anti-Semitism of the millions of people affected by this propaganda and the anti-Semitism of the leaders of Fascism. As in a war, so in the case of anti-Semitism, the excitement of the mass of the people soon dies down. After the first release of infantile impulses they begin to respond to reality considerations once more. They find that their aggressiveness does not remove the conditions of deprivation which have stimulated it. Thus in Germany we find that people are beginning to view with disgust the anti-Semitic propaganda still being carried on by the Nazis. Here, for example, are two reports from Germany given in *The Yellow Spot*, a book which contains the most complete account of the anti-Semitic campaign in Germany.

"An account from Berlin during a publicity drive of *The Sturmer*: '*The Sturmer* campaign failed to wake echo in the population. In Berlin there were actually demonstrations against the anti-Jewish agitation. In Tempelhof, owing to the lack of authority of the S.A., it was more than once necessary to call in the police, who failed equally

to calm the excitement of the crowds. Towards the end of July during such an incident at the corner of Berlinerstrasse and Kaiserin-Augustastrasse a civilian was stabbed by an S.S. man. The victim died immediately. This caused such anger that, in the very presence of the police, Storm Troop and party officials, the crowd shouted to Jews who were trying to rub slanderous or indecent inscriptions off their shop-windows: "Why don't you leave them on, you fools, they're your best publicity!" Women in the crowd asked passers-by: "Aren't the Jews human beings, too?"

"An eye witness report from North Germany:

"In the town of Norden several Jews and Christians alleged to have had relations with them were led through the streets. The townsfolk were indignant. This indignation was particularly strong in the middle-class circles to which the girls belonged. Large knots of people, excitedly discussing the question, formed on the streets. The police who ordered them to move on were openly told they would do better to concern themselves about the Nazi swine who lorded it about the town like pigs every day and then went robbing decent Jews and girls of their honour. The police merely replied that the bystanders should move on and not obstruct the traffic. The local N.S.D.A.P. reported to Berlin that order could no longer be guaranteed in the town. On this, Police General Daluege came in person to Norden. His negotiations with the authorities had the result that the arrested Jews and girls were straightway released. Meanwhile post card photographs of how they had been driven through the town had been made and were being offered for sale. Daluege had the post cards and negatives seized. In this case the townsfolk scored a hundred per cent victory against the Nazis.'"¹

In order to prevent, if possible, the spread of a more rational attitude towards the Jews among the German people, the Fascist incitements to anti-Semitism become more hysterical. Here is the reaction of the leading anti-Semitic paper, *The Sturmer*, to this more enlightened outlook.

¹ *The Yellow Spot*, pp. 276-7.

"It is hardly conceivable that there are still some so-called Germans who are worrying about the Jewish scum. A 'German' contemporary thinks: 'There are also some decent Jews! One has to ascertain first what category a Jew belongs to. One must not condemn the whole creed pack and parcel!'

"The first thing one has to do with a fellow who speaks like that is to bash his teeth in. . . ."¹

We can say, therefore, that, for the mass of the people affected by it, anti-Semitism is a temporary aberration, the product of intense propaganda playing on deprivations and sufferings. These people have temporarily relapsed into an infantile, uncritical attitude which leads them to identify the Jews with their hated father and to revenge themselves upon him.

But this is not so for most, if not all, of the Fascist leaders. For these individuals are unquestionably abnormal persons, for whom anti-Semitism is a necessary outlet for sadistic and other impulses. Hitler's anti-Semitism, we saw, is almost certainly an intense form of sexual envy, based upon feelings of sexual inadequacy. Many passages of *Mein Kampf* show quite clearly this sexual envy, thinly disguised by tones of moral indignation. The Jews are accused of violating "inexperienced blonde girls", of "the seduction of hundreds of girls by repulsive, crooked-legged Jew bastards". He paints a picture of "the black-haired Jew boy who, with satanic joy in his face, for hours on end lies in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he pollutes with his blood". These are obviously the utterances of an individual unbalanced sexually. They are the grotesque fantasies of a mind dominated by sexual inadequacy and envy. As to the cause of this intense envy of Jews in the case of Hitler, we can only guess. We are, however, constrained to ask, with Rudolf Olden, his biographer, "was it perhaps someone else, dark-haired, too, but Aryan, who 'for hours on end lay in wait' while the girl he awaited in vain went off 'unsuspecting with a Jewish rival'?"

¹ *Der Stürmer*, Jan. 1934.

The chief anti-Semite in Germany is Julius Streicher. His paper, *The Sturmer*, excels in pornographic stories concerning alleged sexual relations between Jews and Gentile women. The following is a typical example of Streicher's ravings: "Specifically alien is the semen of a man of another race. . . . It is enough for a Jew to have intercourse with an Aryan woman just once for her blood to be poisoned for ever. . . . Now we know why the Jew does all he can to ravish German girls at the earliest possible moment; why the Jewish physician rapes his female patients while they are under an anaesthetic! He intends the German women to receive the alien semen of a Jew and never again to bear German children."¹

Such are the types in charge of Germany's destiny to-day. Anti-Semitism, it has been said, is the Socialism of fools. This is true for the mass of those who are misled into believing that the Jews are responsible for the national ills. They honestly believe that by removing the Jews they will be smashing the power of capitalism.

But no such illusion exists for the leaders of Fascism. They are in too close touch with the ruling powers not to know who they are. For from them they draw the financial means to conduct their anti-Semitic campaigns. Their anti-Semitism is the expression of warped and twisted mentalities; it gives them the opportunity to indulge in sadistic cruelties, in otherwise insupportable lusts. We shall see, in the following chapter, that it is no accident that a decaying capitalist system can find, for its last defence, only perverts and degenerates.

The anti-Semitism of Hitler has been slavishly copied by Mosley in England. The same hysterical outbursts against the Jews are made, the same world plot to dominate the Gentiles is discovered. As the German Jews were said to hold the German Government in the hollow of their

¹ *The Yellow Spot*, p. 149.

hands, so too the Jews here, asserts the *Blackshirt*,¹ rule the British Government. All the economic woes of the people are laid at the doors of the prosperous Jews. "Too long has the ex-serviceman shivered in the gutter because he dared to risk all for Britain," proclaimed the Fascist organ, "whilst his economic master, the alien Jew, drives past in his limousine."² In depicting the Jews as the economic masters of England, the Fascists designate well-known firms, particularly chain stores, as Jew-controlled. On one occasion, after an imposing list of "Jew-controlled chain stores", the *Blackshirt* had to publish a pathetic apology for the inaccurate information which had led it to designate a well-known chain store, the Dolcis Shoe Company, as Jew-controlled.³ It apologised abjectly and profusely; for its rôle is not to attack capitalist concerns, but to divert the hostility of the workers towards capitalism into anti-Semitic channels.

The methods used by the Fascist movement in this country in its attempts to promote racial hatred can be gauged from the following remarks in the *Blackshirt*. "When seeking an explanation of the arrogant superiority with which Jews behave towards their hosts, it is well to remember the word they use to describe us. The word is *Goyim*, which means 'animals,' and the Jewish idea is that Gentiles exist merely to be used by them for their own convenience."⁴

Now only a deliberate determination to promote hatred of the Jews by any means could have inspired the *Blackshirt* to translate the word *goyim* as animals. Actually it is a Hebrew word and its meaning is simply "nations".⁵ But

¹ Dec. 5th, 1936.

² *Blackshirt*, Dec. 12th, 1936.

³ *ibid.*, Dec. 26th, 1936.

⁴ *ibid.*, Dec. 26th, 1936.

⁵ The Fascist writers are frequently not as careful as they might be. A Fascist author, H. Gibbs, in a book entitled *The Spectre of Communism*, quotes from the Communist writer, R. P. Dutt. Gibbs writes, "German anti-Semitism was not started by Hitler. A Communist writer informs us: 'Modern German anti-Semitism developed from Germany and Austria in the eighteen-seventies, that is, as capitalism was beginning to pass from the liberal epoch towards the imperialist epoch. In 1873

it is unnecessary to linger long over the despicable form which Fascist propaganda takes in this country. Whether it achieves any effect will mainly depend upon the degree to which the united struggle of the workers and the progressive elements of society can be developed. A despairing and disappointed working class may well turn for solace to the "nearest aliens in the street", to remind ourselves of a British Fascist's words. United action is imperative to defeat such a consequence, a united action in which Jewish workers and progressive individuals must join. By this I mean that Jewish workers must be prepared, must, in fact, be in the forefront, in the struggle against both Jewish and Gentile employers.

Socialists and Communists have a task in regard to anti-Semitism which requires, above all, the aid of the Jewish workers and members of the middle class. It is to explain that anti-Semitism is a ruse of the capitalists to divert aggression from themselves and to make the Jews the scapegoat for their sins. Jews must realise that the struggle against anti-Semitism is a struggle against capitalism. Many of them, particularly middle-class Jews, as yet tend to restrict themselves to protests against the Fascist persecutions of Jews. In doing so, they convert the matter into an issue of Jew versus Gentile. Fascism for them is merely a revival of the religious persecution which from time to time has flared up. Its political significance is missed. If the Fascists were to content themselves with the persecution of Socialists and Communists only, they would make no protests. Their anti-Fascism, consequently, is a defence of themselves as Jews. And as such it constitutes a serious provocation to anti-Semitism. For, in narrowing the

there appeared Marx's *Der Sieg des Judentums über das Germanium*, or *The Victory of Jewry over Germanism*. . . ."

This quotation from Dutt gives the impression that Marx accepted the belief in a Jewish plot to dominate Germany. However, when one turns to *Fascism and Social Revolution* (p. 183) from which the quotation is drawn, one finds that Gibbs has misread the name of the author of the above-mentioned anti-Semitic book. It is *Marr* and not *Marx*.

issue in that manner, in maintaining a pro-capitalist outlook, their anti-Fascism appears as a defence of capitalism. In other words, it plays directly into the hands of the Fascist demagogues who win support by exploiting the anti-capitalist feelings of the masses. Jews must realise that contemporary anti-Semitism is primarily a political phenomenon. In years gone by it might have been possible to avert persecution by adopting the Christian faith. But anti-Semitism to-day is not a religious question. This is proclaimed by Hitler in his denunciation of the Austrian Christian Socialist Party. "It is obvious," he says, "that a fight on such a basis (i.e. religious anti-Semitism) would worry the Jews to a very limited degree. If the worst came to the worst, a drop of holy water would always get them out of their troubles and preserve their Judaism at the same time."¹

Hence, despite their refusal to recognise the political significance of contemporary anti-Semitism, middle-class Jews cannot, in fact, avoid becoming the centre of a political struggle. They have the choice of associating themselves directly with the workers' struggle against capitalism, as an expression of anti-Fascism, or of frustrating this struggle by an allegiance to capitalism. Once they realise that the purpose of the Fascists is to make them the scapegoat of capitalism, they will appreciate that the best answer to Fascism is to join in the struggle against the real culprits. In short, if the Jews want a cessation of anti-Semitism, they must take their place in the struggle for a cessation of capitalism.

On the other hand, there are many Jews who look towards Palestine, their historic home, for the solution of their problems. This is a natural and understandable reaction to the feelings of national deprivation which we mentioned earlier. But it is an aspiration which, under the conditions of capitalism, spells danger for the Jews. Palestine is a sphere of investment for many Jewish, British and American industrialists and also a strategic point in

¹ *My Struggle*, p. 58.

British imperialist defences. Outside of a few Communist colonies capitalist conditions of life prevail there and those conditions inevitably breed the conflicts which exist in this country. There is indeed a Jewish Fascist movement which excels in strike-breaking and anti-working class activities.

None-the-less, we can understand these Jewish aspirations. While Palestine presents little prospect of their realisation, there is one country in the world in which the Jews are allowed to develop their own culture, freely and fully.

That is the country where capitalism has been destroyed and with capitalism has also disappeared one of capitalism's most hateful and despicable characteristics, namely, racial distinctions. In the Soviet Union such distinctions are not permitted to interfere with the rights of the citizens. Article 123 of the new constitution of the U.S.S.R. states: "The equality of the rights of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. irrespective of their nationality or race, in all fields of economic, State, cultural, social and political life, is an irrevocable law. Any direct or indirect restriction of these rights or conversely the establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of the race or nationality to which they belong, as well as any propagation of racial or national exceptionalism or hatred or contempt, is punishable by law." This has been the attitude of the Soviet Union since its establishment.

The *Manchester Guardian* published an account of the situation of the Jews in Georgia. The Jews in Tiflis, says the account, are "most enthusiastic about Soviet rule. They had had, perhaps, the worst time of anyone in Tsarist days. 'But now we are all part of Georgia,' one old man said; 'we are freer and happier than the Jews in any other country under the sun here in Georgia. Here is heaven at last for the Jews.' His only complaint was that their synagogue was not large enough to hold all the people who came to the services."¹

When Jewish periodicals lend themselves to the dissemination of slanders of the first Socialist country, their

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, Jan. 21st, 1937.

readers would do well to reflect on the above. In one country in the world may the Jews build up a national home, may they develop their own culture and enter all walks of social and political life, without fear of racial discrimination. In Socialism alone can the Jews realise their deepest aspirations. Let every Jew who is an anti-Socialist, and there are many, realise that he thereby allies himself with Fascism. For it is fear of Socialism which compels the capitalist class to fan the fires of anti-Semitism. They seek thereby to divert the wrath of the workers from themselves and the first victims whom they offer to appease the anger of the workers are the professional and small business Jews, Jews who often are avowed anti-Socialists.

NOTE TO CHAPTER XII

In the preceding chapter there has been no mention of any "racial" "national" or other peculiarities which many people believe contribute in the Jews themselves to the stimulation of anti-Semitism. For example, it is often said that the Jews are by nature an aggressive, ostentatious people, given to flaunting their wealth, etc. Now this seems to me to be one of those facile generalisations which so often take the place of serious thought. It has no more basis in fact than the caricature of the Jew as a hook-nosed Shylock. The Jews, ethnologically considered, are as mixed a people as any. According to Professors Haddon and Huxley, attempts to classify the Jews on a racial basis have failed. We must, however, recognise a characteristic manifested by some Jews but which cannot be said to be peculiarly Jewish. It is a well-known fact that immigrants into a country display an amazing amount of energy and drive, as if impelled by some inner force to make good. One reason is, that to venture into a foreign country in order to gain a livelihood, demands a certain courage and determination to which the strangeness of the environment must act as a strong stimulus. There is, too, a self-consciousness arising from the strangeness of language,

customs, etc., which tends to provoke a compensatory truculence of bearing. These are characteristics of all immigrants whether Jewish, Italian, or Irish or English, in the United States. Thus the *Cambridge Modern History* comments on the emigration in the last century to Australia and America, as follows: "Many of the emigrants, British as well as Irish, carried bitter memories with them. *The more capable and daring went*; the more listless and timid remained." (My italics.) Here, too, we see certain psychological possibilities. For the bitter memories which must result from having to leave the land of one's birth, must increase one's unconscious aggression. There is, therefore, the possibility that the Jew who has not assimilated himself with the surroundings of the country in which he lives, who keeps himself apart, may display aggressive characteristics. But in Britain especially, the great majority of Jews have made contact with the world outside their family circles and have come to look upon the land in which they live as their motherland. They were born here, and they entertain towards Britain the same emotional feelings as do non-Jews. Such Jews, consequently, do not feel like strangers or foreigners, and do not manifest any particularly noticeable aggressive characteristics. The final solution of anti-Semitism would seem, therefore, to lie in the complete assimilation of the Jews with the nations in which they live, the breaking down of all barriers which habit, custom and tradition have erected.

CHAPTER XIII

SADISM AND SOCIAL DECAY

IN THE FIRST part of this book we saw that capitalism has entered the period of its decline. The ruling, capitalist class has lost the justification for its existence which it had when capitalism was a thriving, expanding system. It is becoming increasingly divorced from the organisation and participation in production which characterised it in its vigorous, healthy youth. "More and more," said Lenin, "there emerges, as one of the tendencies of Imperialism (the last stage of capitalism), the creation of the 'bondholding' (rentier) state, the usurer state, in which the bourgeoisie lives on the proceeds of capital exports and by 'clipping coupons'."¹

None the less, the capitalist class still retains control of the economic life of the country, the ownership of the means of production, and thereby constitutes an absolute obstacle to the development of the social forms of ownership required to bring the latter into correspondence with the social basis of production.

The parasitic rôle which the ruling class, as a whole, now plays, has certain important psychological consequences. They are consequences which reveal most strikingly the truth of the Freudian viewpoint that the building of organised human society has involved the use of sublimated sex impulses. Freud maintains that the energy used in the constructive tasks involved in social life is largely sexual. In other words, the occupation of work, of wealth production, provides a healthy, socialised and sublimated expression for sexual impulses. The *necessity* to perform these sublimations, to divert this sexual energy into channels of wealth production, undoubtedly proceeds from environmental

¹ Lenin, *Imperialism* (Martin Lawrence).

pressure. Man must work in order to live. But, as Engels has shown in the *Origin of the Family*, the development of labour takes place first of all within a society based on sexual ties. "The less labour is developed and the less abundant the quantity of its production and therefore the wealth of society, the more society is seen to be under the domination of sexual ties." But with the development of production the basis of society shifts from a sexual one to a wealth-productive basis. In other words, we may regard the labour process as a method of absorbing the original sexual energy, giving it a socialised expression in wealth production.¹

And, indeed, in the period of the expansion of capitalism the bourgeoisie was noted for its Victorian respectability, its sexual taboos and its puritanical outlook. But now, "a parasitic and decadent governing class invariably turns to the extremes of luxury, indolence and self-indulgence. The great change that came over the rulers of England in their mode of life, starting with the naughty 'nineties, expressed the social changes wrought by the transition to imperialism".² How can we express this change psychologically?

Simply that the modern capitalist class, having withdrawn from the healthy participation in the processes of production which absorbed and sublimated its sexual energy, must inevitably seek some alternative outlets. This is where a knowledge of the psychology of the individual mind helps us to understand an important social process.

When the individual mind is debarred by external circumstances from a healthy, adult manifestation of the sexual instincts, it seeks infantile modes of expression, or, in other words, it *regresses*. It takes refuge in perverse forms of sexual gratification which belong to an infantile level. Is this not an interesting parallel to what is taking place in present-day bourgeois society? Does not the widely-recognised decadence of that society present just such a

¹ This is discussed more fully in the author's *Freud and Marx*.

² Allen Hutt, *This Final Crisis*.

regression to perverse and infantile modes of behaviour? The individual member of the ruling class, increasingly parasitic and divorced from the sublimated channels of wealth production, must inevitably regress to an infantile level of sexual gratification. This takes the form of ceaseless pursuit of new excitements, an absorption in sensations, a quest for thrills, which are closely associated with the self-love of the infant. The child gains his earliest forms of sexual gratification through the pleasure derived from the stimulation of various parts of the body. He has no interest in the outside world whence the stimulations come. He is completely absorbed in the pleasurable sensations themselves.

So too does a tendency manifest itself in the wealthy parasites to quest for new sensations, caring little whence they come, so long as they minister to their appetites.

This of course, is most marked in the younger generation of the ruling class which has had little contact with production. There is little for them to do but to seek for new sensations, to follow one craze and fashion after another. Dress, drink, sport, racing, hunting, dancing, sampling new dishes and cocktails, form their main occupations. They are born, doomed by their social position, to be useless drones. There is no objective, social justification for their existence, so they develop a morbid sensation-mongering in which they can engross themselves and forget about the reality of their parasitic existence. They are irresponsible and lacking serious purpose, interested in the world only to the extent to which it ministers to their appetites.

The social columns of the Press of this country devotes itself, to a large extent, to reporting the doings of these "bright young people". Below I give some examples of Press comments and reports which indicate the tendencies to decadence and irresponsibility developing within our ruling class. They are, of course, extreme examples, interesting only in pointing to the above-mentioned tendencies.

"Young 'society's' latest pastime is tandem riding. There is to be a tandem cycle race in the heart of London next week, in which . . . several . . . members of the British and American bright young people will take part. The tandem riders will start from a cocktail club near Golden Square, W., next Monday evening, in their race down to Piccadilly Circus, down the Haymarket, round the Carlton Hotel, up Lower Regent Street and back to Golden Square. Men who enter for the race must wear morning coats and bowler hats. Women will don hair nets and goggles. The prize is a magnum of champagne."

"[They] had stipulated that the guests should appear dressed as children under 14. Rhymes on the walls, nursery pictures, and toys were used to make the ballroom represent a nursery."

"It would be difficult to imagine any gathering more gifted with beauty and brains. Yet I fancy that the chief success of the evening was achieved by the simple process of throwing custard pies. Or, rather, éclairs. One fair lady caught one full in the eye. . ."

"Young married couple, own car, etc., propose to go away for a holiday in October; they have no plans at present for the period between two shooting visits and would welcome suggestions of an amusing nature; willing to pay to be amused. Write Box——"

The reader may find it difficult to repress a smile at these examples of irresponsibility on the part of the idle rich, the desire to escape from the tedium of a parasitic existence at any cost. These examples lose their humorous aspect, however, when we reflect how closely bound up they are with the poverty and misery at the other end of the social scale. For it is only because a socially useless ruling class clings tenaciously to its monopoly of the means of production that slums, mal-nutrition, unemployment and all the evils of contemporary life persist.

There are, however, more patently revolting aspects of

this lack of serious purpose in the ruling class. Consider the following:

"Surely no mother love can equal that all-absorbing interest we feel in our pets, and the more improbable the pets, according to the modern craze, the more passionate our regard for them. The child can always be sent back to its Nannie and the nursery when we weary of its endless questions. But who except ourselves can we trust with our precious little Annie, the ant-bear, or that perfect and most precious treasure, Fanny, the white cockatoo."—*Vogue*.

The view, then, that children very early manifest a sexual life, helps us to understand the psychological aspects of ruling-class decadence. Without this theory we should be unable to explain the tendency in this class to erotic sensationalism. We should be confined merely to noting it, regarding it as somehow vaguely connected with the decline of that class as a necessary economic and social factor. Here, Freudian theory bridges an important gap in our knowledge. It shows that the withdrawal of the capitalist class from active participation in the productive process means that an important channel of sublimation for the sexual impulses is closed to it. The consequence is that regression takes place and infantile modes of expression are sought.

The decadence of the ruling class manifests itself not only in these perverse tendencies in the social life of the individual member of the ruling class. It also manifests itself in both the cultural and political spheres. With the former we shall deal later, in a chapter concerned with the flight from reality in bourgeois intellectual life.

The political decadence of the ruling class is clear from the fact that, in order to continue its rule, it has increasingly to rely on a combination of demagoguery and brutality. Fascism, which we have shown to be the most extreme political expression of the decay of capitalism, is psychologically the sadistic reaction of the ruling class to the revolutionary menace of the workers. To understand this

particular reaction, we must consider, more closely, the factor of sadism.

We have seen, in an earlier chapter, that aggression results from the frustrations of the love desires of the child. There is, however, an original, inborn aggression which forms part of the instinctual inheritance of the individual. This has been variously described by psychologists as the aggressive, the combative, the destructive and the death instinct.

At a very early stage in the development of the sexual instinct, aggression and sex impulses become fused. That is to say, aggression becomes a vehicle for the sex instinct, a means of obtaining satisfaction for it. This is most marked in children who have just developed an awareness of themselves as individuals. In this stage of development the child falls in love with himself.¹ He glories in his new-found individuality by boisterous and rough behaviour; often by wanton cruelty. In this way, he proclaims what a fine fellow he is, how powerful and deserving of admiration. Thus, his self-love and aggression become linked together. His aggression to others is an expression of his love for himself.

The normal development of the child's love life, however, leads to the repression of this aggression. The normal adult ceases to be self-centred in his love. He seeks for other people to love and from whom to receive love. So long as his love for others receives adequate expression he successfully maintains the repression on his childhood aggression. There are, however, individuals who, for some reason, fail to make a satisfactory adjustment in their love lives. They, then, fall back, or regress, to the infantile stage where aggression was the dominant mode of sexual expression. They suffer from an unconscious feeling of unworthiness for which their truculence and cruelty are compensations.

Such individuals are known as *sadists*. The sadist obtains sexual satisfaction by the infliction of mental and physical

¹ This is the stage known in modern psychology as *narcissism*.

pain on others. Such sadistic impulses exist in the normal person also, but they do not dominate his sexual life. It is a familiar fact that love-making involves some degree of pain which enhances the pleasure experienced. Thus, lovers bite each other on the ear, cheek, etc., as preliminaries to the act of intercourse. The phrase "the exquisite pain involved in love" aptly expresses this blending of pain and pleasure.

Social life, also, provides the normal individual with a number of ways (described in Chapter VII) of satisfying his unconscious aggression. As we have seen in relation to war and nationalism, the unconscious aggression of the normal individual may break through the repressive barriers erected against it, under the stress of strong external stimuli and convert the individual into a blood-lusting maniac. But the normal adult manages to maintain such impulses within bounds at most times, satisfying them in the harmless fashions described above.

The sadistic pervert, however, is completely dominated by a lust to torture, to hurt and to gloat over the sufferings inflicted on others. His sadistic impulses are unreined; they meet with little or no resistance from his conscious mind. And it is precisely this type of individual who can best express the political objectives of a decaying, capitalist system. For the political aim of the present ruling class is to crush the growing revolt against the unnecessary poverty and misery which exist within capitalism. "The principal aim of Fascism," says the Communist International Programme, "is to destroy the revolutionary labour vanguard . . . (it) discloses itself as a terrorist dictatorship of big capital." To accomplish this end, the capitalists have to enlist all that is rotten within it, its intellectual and political dregs. The savagery of a doomed social class can only find expression in a political party whose leaders are degenerate, sadistic types. For no one else would shoulder the responsibility of performing the anti-historical, anti-progressive task of bolstering up a doomed social system, by torturing, murdering and

imprisoning the best of the people.¹ Here is an account of some of the men whose services are being used to this end in Germany. It may be exaggerated in some details, but its general correctness is borne out by the treatment received at the hands of these men by Socialists, Communists, Jews, etc.: "Goering . . . has a record which would prevent any man within a civilised community holding any office whatsoever. Goering is a notorious morphia addict. . . . The Swedish police confined Goering for six months in a nursing home in order to prevent him

¹ Some degree of sadism has always, of course, characterised the rule of the capitalist class. Repression at home and in the colonies, aggression towards rival imperialisms, have always been features of capitalist rule. But the degree has varied from time to time with the political requirements of capitalism. Thus, the politician who is temperamentally best suited to serve capitalism during a war, may be a serious liability during a period of peaceful expansion. The late Lord Salisbury, for example, averted war between England and France in 1898, when a politician of less even temper might well have precipitated a war. The psycho-analyst, Dr. Ernest Jones, suggests that the wise handling of the matter was due to Lord Salisbury's relative freedom from unconscious aggression. The Socialist, John Strachey, on the other hand, suggests that the fact that there was plenty to grab in Africa, and only two main grabbers, was the chief reason for the avoidance of war. Can we not correlate these two views in the light of the above, and say that the absence of undue aggression in a politician at that time, admirably suited the political interests of the British ruling class? I do not suggest that there is always, or ever, a 100 per cent correlation between the psychology of leading politicians and the necessities of capitalist politics. But that politicians come into the limelight and then fade into obscurity as their temperament first suits them and then unsuits them to perform certain political tasks, seems, at least, a well-marked tendency. It would be interesting to correlate the succession of Premiers in this country with the changing political needs of capitalism. It is doubtful, for example, whether a MacDonald could play the rôle of a Lloyd George, or a Baldwin that which his successor may be called upon to play.

In the same way, we can correlate the aggressiveness of pre-war Germany with the political needs which an unstable, recently established national unity demanded. (We already did this in Chapter VII.) Moreover, Germany, having entered the ranks of imperialistic nations rather late in the day, was compelled to pursue its rivals with a ruthless vigour.

We must note, therefore, that aggression, at home and abroad, has always typified capitalist politics. When faced, however, with the threat of social revolution, this aggression becomes unbounded and demands for its exercise politicians who are sadistic in temperament.

from committing acts of violence against women. He was twice charged in 1926 with personal assaults. (Stockholm police records.) He pleaded not guilty, admitting that he was under the influence of drugs and not responsible for his actions when he committed them. Thus Prussia is at the mercy of an inveterate drug fiend, who, whenever he is under the influence of his drug ecstasies, incites the brutal instincts of the Nazi hooligans by fanatical invective. . . . Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the vitriol-spitting Minister of Propaganda in the Hitler Government is a crippled syphilitic, whose frustrated ambition has made him an insidious slanderer and agitator. His only desire is to compensate his bodily defects by political success and he has been doing this successfully throughout his career with complete freedom from any scruples, ethical or moral.

. . . Herr Frick, a man who calls everybody and anybody who is not a member of the Nazi Party a traitor and a coward.

During the war, although fit, Frick never left his home. After the war he became Police official for the Munich police. He used his office to forge passports by the dozen for Nazi Fehme murderers (political murders)

. . . Count Helldorf . . . has been involved in more than a dozen scandals, including gambling, with subsequent failure to pay debts of honour, confidence swindling, etc, and assault. He is deeply involved in the case of Hanussen's murder. . . . The Ministry of Education in Prussia is in the hands of a certified lunatic. . . . In 1929 Herr Rust was a college teacher. He suddenly asked the school authorities to be retired on a pension; he supported his request with a doctor's certificate that he was suffering from general paralysis which had affected the faculties of his brain. . . . Rust is the man who has dismissed more than eleven hundred professors from the universities, and teachers from the schools. . . . In 1928 Herr Heine . . . was sentenced for the murder of a subordinate in the Black Reichwehr, to 15 years' penal servitude of which he served some sixteen months. . . ."¹

¹ *Hitler as Frankenstein*, pp. 139 *et seq.*

In Italy also we find the same zeal to torture and murder. One particular event which stirred the whole of Italy and Europe to extreme horror was the murder of Matteotti, a young Socialist leader. The Italian people was aroused at the hideous crime and the Fascist régime faced annihilation at their hands. Unfortunately it received no organised lead from the parliamentary opposition (mainly Socialist) which, with sublime stupidity, waited for Mussolini to resign in the time-honoured parliamentary manner. But Mussolini was no Giolitti. Faced with the pusillanimous attitude of the opposition he brazenly justified the crime on "revolutionary grounds". "Insurrection," he declared, "like all great social movements, brings together the good and the bad, ascetics and rogues, idealists and profiteers, those who are violent from motives of lucre. . ."¹ From denying any knowledge of the Matteotti murder and even arresting three prominent members of the Fascisti, who were later allowed to escape any punishment, Mussolini, confronted with a spineless opposition, defiantly took the guilt on his own shoulders. According to his admirer, Munro, ". . . in slow deliberate tones he said: 'I hereby declare in face of this Assembly and in face of all the Italian people that I and I alone assume the political, moral and historical responsibility for everything that has befallen. . . . If Fascism has only been castor-oil and clubs and not, instead, a superb passion of the best Italian youth—the fault is mine. If Fascism has been an association of criminals, if all the violence has been the outcome of a certain historical, political and moral atmosphere—again the responsibility is mine. . . .'"²

These outrages are being paralleled, to-day, in Spain. The Fascist leader, General Franco, has declared his determination to wipe out all trade unionists in his endeavour to establish Fascism. That this is no idle threat on his part may be seen from the following note, issued by the Spanish Embassy in London:

¹ Ion S. Munro, *Through Fascism to World Power*, p. 186.

² Ion S. Munro, *Through Fascism to World Power*, p. 192.

"When insurgents have occupied a district they have systematically shot all workers carrying trade union cards. On the capture of Badajoz by insurgent troops, 2,000 workmen were herded in the bull ring and shot down mercilessly with machine-guns. In Seville alone, more than 9,000 workers and peasants were executed. Moors and Foreign Legionaries went through the working-class quarters throwing hand-grenades into houses containing women and children, and the Moorish troops sacked and plundered freely. At the village of El Carpio, near Cordoba, 200 workmen were made to dig their communal grave—a great pit—in the cemetery and then were shot."¹

Spain's great poet, and one of the greatest in Europe, Frederico Garcia Lorca, was barbarously murdered. In contrast to this savage gesture against culture we can place the extreme concern of the democratic forces for the protection of the works and libraries of scientists. "We never felt ourselves so fervently Spanish," declares a manifesto issued by ten prominent scientists, "as in this moment when we see militiamen risking their lives to save books from our libraries and scientific works which were set afire by incendiary bombs thrown down from foreign aeroplanes." Here we have a symbolic representation of the differing rôles of Fascism and the forces of progress. The one to torture and murder, to destroy human lives, to destroy culture, to root up everything which makes for human enlightenment and happiness. The forces of progress are exemplified in the Spanish workers. They, fighting desperately for their country, are yet willing to take enormous risks to safeguard works of science and literature. In truth, the future of culture, of art, science and literature, is in the hands of the workers.

We must note an argument used above by Mussolini, and to be heard very often, as a justification for the brutalities of Fascist régimes. These excesses, it is said, are the normal, unavoidable accompaniments of a revolution. They are no more evidence of torture for the sake

¹ *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 17th, 1936.

of torture than were the severities with which the Russian workers dealt with counter-revolutionaries.

To begin with, Fascism is not a revolutionary force. It is a reaction to the revolutionary mood of the people, on the part of the capitalists. The threat of revolt arouses all the latent sadism of that class, finding expression in the senseless cruelties and tortures of their Fascist hirelings. But it is not enough to assert this. What proves the sadistic nature of Fascist terror is the fact that long after visible opposition had ceased, the tortures and cruelties carried on. Furthermore, neither Hitler nor Mussolini accomplished an overthrow of an existing system. They were appointed by the ruling authoritative forces. Mussolini was sent for by the King while Hitler was appointed by the President. But the following observations of a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* throw some light on the character of the Brown Terror in Germany.

"The 'Brown Terror' is, both for the number of the victims and for the inhumanity of the methods used, one of the most frightful atrocities of modern times, and in no way comparable with the Red Terror of revolutionary Russia or France, because it is not an instrument used under the compulsion for life or death.

"The alternative to those two Red Terrors was a White Terror; but to the Brown Terror (which is a variety of the White) there was no alternative Terror, for at no time were the Nazis oppressed, or in danger of oppression by their opponents when they were in power, as the Nazis are oppressing their opponents now that these are prostrate."¹

In contrast, the terror in Russia was subordinated to a high social purpose. It defended the achievements of the Russian revolution from the infuriated attempts of the defeated capitalist and landowning classes to regain their control. It was necessarily harsh but free from any lust for torture or sadistic orgies. Undoubtedly it expressed the anger of the working masses of Russia and must have drawn its psychological strength from aggressive impulses.

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, March 28th, 1933.

But the direction of these impulses was in the hands of highly rational and socially conscious individuals who regarded the use of violence as an unpleasant necessity. The lesson of history, particularly from the example of the Paris Commune, is that those whose chief concern is the building of a new society, tend to be over-lenient towards their opponents. It is only when that leniency is answered by treachery and the destruction of numbers of workers' lives that the revolutionaries have to impose stern measures. In Russia ex-Generals and priests, for example, constantly broke the parole which they gave to the revolutionary authorities and used the mildness of the authorities to plot against the Soviet régime.

Perhaps the following observations of a one-time prisoner in Soviet Russia will show that, whatever the motives of the revolutionaries in harshly treating their opponents, they were not the lust for torture. The observations are made by an individual who does not hide her antipathy to the use of violence in any circumstances. She says: "I myself was in Soviet Russia during the revolution and endured imprisonment for three and a half months in the cells of the Tcheka; I was a witness of arrests and executions, but the condemned men were killed outright—by enraged beasts, certainly, but by natural beasts. There was a kind of cleanness in those killings, while the Nazi régime practises by order the sadistic atrocities that are the products of diseased and decadent minds."¹ (We forbear from commenting on Madame Keun's characterisation of the restraint and vigour of the revolutionary terror. It has saved Russia from the "sadistic atrocities" of Fascism, and, if social democracy had been less timid, would have saved Italy and Germany.)

Another interesting comment on Nazi and revolutionary terror comes from a pro-Nazi source. Mr. H. Powys Greenwood tells why he prefers the German "revolution" on "humanitarian grounds". Replying to the objections of

¹ Odette Keun, *Darkness from the North*, p. 77.

some Socialist friends that the loss of life in Russia was "clean shooting" and that "people were not beaten up by bullies in Brown Houses and concentration camps", he observes: "most people would probably prefer being beaten to being shot, however clean the bullets. The bullying aspect of some Nazi terrorism had its advantages."¹ The fact of course is that this "bullying aspect" was an evidence of the sadistic nature of Nazi terrorism which by no means stopped short at a beating up. The Nazi hooligans had, for months before the triumph of Hitler, been promised orgies of torture and murder. Hitler had told them that heads would roll, and their sadistic appetites had been whetted with visions of a St. Bartholomew's Night. "The street clear for the S.A.", "The night of the long knife", were long dreamed of by these blood-lusting degenerates.

Thus we see that a decadent ruling class which had become increasingly divorced from the process of production and increasingly an obstacle in the road of further social development, can only retain its privileged position by enlisting the most debased types of humanity to its aid. Working people may be deceived into supporting Fascist movements and may become inflamed against Jews, Marxists, foreigners. But they have, at least, some justification in the illusion, sincerely held, that in fighting these enemies, they are fighting for themselves, their wives and families and their country. In the first waves of excitement upon which the new régime floats into existence they may tolerate and even indulge in excesses of brutality themselves, believing that they are necessary in the struggle for the creation of a new country. But as the excitement subsides so the perpetration of atrocities becomes restricted to the bands of Fascist degenerates, who desire them to gratify their own sadistic impulses. Fascist countries, at the moment, are vast arenas in which these degenerates can indulge in sadistic perversion. They have bound the people hand and foot, and on their

¹ H. Powys Greenwood, *The German Revolution*, p. 149.

prostrate bodies practice their vices. The bonds which imprison the peoples of Fascist countries are largely psychological. So long as the leaders of Fascism can command the devotion and self-sacrifice, the love and hopes, of millions of uncritical people, their sway is unchallengeable. But when these leaders become exposed as the monsters they are, the peoples of Fascist countries will look back on the period of their rule as the darkest in their history. History will regard these mentally twisted charlatans with loathing and horror. They fittingly express all the rottenness, the corruption, which a degenerate ruling class, long past its healthy youth, produces in its death struggle.

Sadism, consequently, is a pathological symptom of a doomed social class. It is the regression to a primitive, ferocious level of behaviour which a deep fear of social reality engenders. A social class, to which history has given its marching orders, never voluntarily abdicates in favour of the young and healthy revolutionary class, which is destined to replace it. Instead, it resists with a savagery born of desperation; it mobilises every degenerate force within its social order, to beat back the onward rising revolutionary tide. Political degenerates, men who for lust of torture, power and money, willingly place themselves at the heads of reactionary movements; maddened petit bourgeois, philosophical decadents, whose twisted minds picture only the doom of capitalism and not the promise of socialism¹; declassed proletarians who have been so crushed and bruised by capitalism as to have lost every healthy impulse, these are the motley forces which form the reactionary vanguard upon which capitalism, in its dying days, depends.

Before we conclude this section we must mention another aspect of the sadistic character of Fascism.

The sadistic character of Fascism is markedly shown in its attitude towards women. Women have increasingly thrown off the subjection which has been their fate in class society. They have fought for equal political rights,

¹ e.g. Spengler, see Chapter XVII

and the right to enter industry, the professions, etc., on equal terms with men, with notable success. But these gains are destroyed in Fascist countries. It is symptomatic of the morbid aggressiveness of the Fascists to assert, in an exaggerated form, the principle of male superiority which regards women as the sexual toys of men, suitable only for domestic work and the rearing of families. The contempt for women and the need to subject them to masculine will, was expressed by the homo-sexual Rohm, in the following words:

"With the exception until now of the N.S.D.A.P. (National Socialist German Workers' Party), all the parties send women as national representatives to the parliaments. *Mulier taceat* (let the women be silent) is no longer valid; women join everywhere in the discussions, and men submit to their rulings. Periods of political power and greatness, periods of struggle, have never sufficed the female sex to hold a commanding position. That an Alexander the Great or Frederick the Great, a Caesar or a Napoleon, a Prince Eugène or a Charles XII of Sweden should submit to female influence is hardly conceivable."¹

Women, under Fascism, must, in the words of Göring, give themselves to the recreation of tired warriors. Their greatest pleasure must be the breeding of material for the battlefield.

This emphasis on the passive, unresisting, masochistic rôle of women is the natural counterpart of the sadistic lusts of the Fascist leaders. Women must only know the pain and suffering of child-bearing, must bring their children up with heavy sacrifices to feed the cannon. When the warrior comes home from his killing woman must submit herself to his violent embraces, must produce more children for the sport of the warrior. Only an insanely bloodthirsty mind could conceive of such a cruel destiny for women, could so brutally override the greater sensitiveness of the feminine sex with the claims of masculine strength. This callous contempt for the

¹ Quoted by Konrad Heiden in *Hitler*, p. 217

physical weakness of women is manifested in the homosexual choice of love-objects on the part of many leading Fascists. For women are not even worthy of love for love's sake. They are domestic creatures, only to be used for breeding purposes but incapable of that love and comradeship which a man can give.

"Woman," said Spengler, the arch-philosopher of Fascism, "is to be neither comrade, nor beloved, but only mother."

Only to bear children for the battlefield, is woman's destiny under Fascism; only as mother to men doomed to die or be maimed in war; but for love and comradeship, she is unworthy.

In this perverted attitude towards women we can see again how the needs of a decaying capitalist system are best served by a party led by degenerates. For capitalism, in its feverish preparations for war, can make better use of women as breeders of future warriors than as cheap labour in industry. In fact, by forcing them back into domesticity they can also lighten their wages and unemployment bills.

What a contrast this makes to the healthy, Socialist attitude towards women in the first Socialist country of the world. There, women participate on an equal basis, which is guaranteed by State edict, in every sphere of life. No avenue is closed to them; they may take their place in politics, industry, science, literature and art, without fear of sexual barriers.

The treatment of women, it has been said, is the best indication of the cultural level reached by a civilisation. On this test alone, Fascism reveals its barbaric, degenerate nature, while Socialism proclaims the ascendancy of man to a higher cultural level. "Without tearing women away from the stupefying domestic and kitchen atmosphere," said Lenin, "it is impossible to secure real freedom, it is impossible to build a democracy, let alone Socialism."

PART III

THEORIES OF FASCISM

CHAPTER XIV

THEORIES OF FASCISM

IN THIS PART of the book we shall consider some of the theories associated with Fascism. For while Fascism is essentially a political method which the ruling class adopts in the face of the growing revolutionary temper of the masses, it attempts to disguise its brutal purposes by pretending to possess a distinctive theoretical outlook.

Fascism, says R. P. Dutt, is "solely a tactical method of finance capitalism . . . to defeat the proletarian revolution, to divide the exploited population, and so to maintain capitalist rule. All the propaganda 'theories', mythological trimmings, supposed 'new school of political thought', etc., only constitute a smoke-screen to cover this aim."

But, we may ask, why should Fascists feel a need to devise elaborate political, racial and philosophical theories, which mean very little to the wide masses of people whom they attempt to win over by their propaganda? Fascism, after all, wins its support by a play on emotional tendencies in the masses, and carefully avoids making any intellectual appeal. "The general mass of a nation," says Hitler, "do not consist of philosophers; faith for them is very largely the sole basis for a moral view of life." And, as Dutt points out, there was hardly a pretence of a philosophy of Fascism in Italy until it had been established for over two years. Then Mussolini discovered that Fascism needed a philosophy and ordered it "as simply as a waggon-load of blacksticks". In a letter to Bianchi, August 27th, 1921, he wrote, "Italian Fascism now requires under pain of death, or worse, of suicide, to provide itself with a 'body of doctrines'. The expression is a rather strong one, but I would desire that within

the two months between now and the National Congress, the philosophy of Fascism must be created."¹

For whom was the creation of this "philosophy of Fascism" so necessary? The Italian people had either been terrorised into silence, or bamboozled by demagogic lies into thinking of Mussolini as their saviour. They needed no "philosophy" to fortify their faith; they believed in Mussolini and that was sufficient. The *Popolo d'Italia* expressed this blind belief which, as Mussolini's mouth-piece, it endeavoured to encourage, in the following manner:

"With him and thanks to him, no question arises in our minds. We know that he guides us, we know that nothing is too difficult nor too dangerous with and for him. . . His intuition is exact, his will divine, his understanding of human strength and weakness infinite." Not for the Italian masses then could Mussolini so urgently have required a Fascist philosophy. The truth, I believe, is that a Fascist philosophy was required for Mussolini himself and other leading Fascists who had no illusions as to the demagogic content of their propaganda. It was required because Fascist leaders, like other men, are impelled to screen from their conscious minds the real unconscious motives of their actions. A "body of doctrines" would give them a mental assurance that what they were doing was consonant with some great, universal purpose which justified the excesses, the lies, the horrors of their policies, as unavoidable means to the achievement of this purpose. A Fascist philosophy would *rationalise* the unconscious impulses which underlay their political deeds, reconciling the sadistic cruelties, the personal ambition, with conscious standards. For no one can imagine that the Fascist leaders could unleash the horrors of torture and murder without feeling a strong need for self-justification. No body of people, whether religious or political, tortures its opponents without some good "reason". The most diabolical cruelties of the Inquisition

¹ Quoted by R. P. Dutt in *Fascism and Social Revolution*.

had their elaborate theological justifications. Torturers, whether religious or political, have this in common with other people. They must disguise the conscious expression of their unconscious, infantile impulses so that they do not clash too violently with accepted conscious standards. And if no conscious standards exist which permit them expression, then other conscious standards have to be invented. Hence the need for a Fascist philosophy. This is the psychological process known as *rationalisation*. It is the evoking of conscious standards to justify the expression of unconscious impulses.

Mussolini, we must recall, required a body of doctrines "on pain of death or, worse, of suicide". The very phrasing indicates a mental discomfort caused by barely disguised sadistic impulses. His fear is of death through suicide, rather than death from some outside agency; a fear which expresses the mental instability set up by a conflict between conscious standards and unconscious impulses. But once a philosophy has been discovered or invented which rationalises the expression of these unconscious impulses and thereby provides a set of conscious standards which makes their expression in consciousness permissible, then the brutalities of Fascism can be contemplated with philosophic calm. Indeed, having convinced himself that he is fulfilling some historical destiny, the Fascist leader can regard the atrocities performed in his name as evidence of his own resolute and stern devotion to a purpose higher than mortal life. It is inconceivable that Mussolini or anyone else is completely cynical. He must, by now, have convinced himself that some inexorable destiny guides him in all he does. He is all the more a menace for that.

A remarkable example is given by Wickham Steed, showing how the most revolting sadistic actions may be interpreted in terms which reflect nothing but credit and even glory on their perpetrator. In June 1935, as is well known, Hitler cold-bloodedly had some hundreds of his best friends shot down. It was an act which shocked the world. It put the killings of gangster rivalries in the shade.

Whatever the reasons which made the existence of these men an embarrassment to Hitler, his mode of getting rid of them stamped him as the most depraved kind of sadist pervert. But this did not prevent his actions being rationalised in such a manner that they were presented to the German people as evidence of an immense self-sacrifice and devotion to the welfare of the German nation which thrust aside all personal considerations. On July 1st the *Westdeutscher Beobachter* appeared with the following panegyric:

"A parallel case is not to be found in the whole of history! Never before has a leader submerged his personal feelings so completely, never before has there been a statesman so utterly concerned for the welfare of the nation, as the Leader. Neither Alexander the Great, nor any other Emperor or King in ancient history, neither Bonaparte nor Frederick the Great has done anything like it. Superhuman leadership, such as we have just witnessed, can surely never be repeated. One needs to have followed the Leader for years as we have done, have felt the spirit of the movement pulsing through our veins, in order to appreciate the immensity of his sacrifice; to understand what it meant to him to order so many of his old friends many of them men with splendid pasts, to be shot. We stand in awe of this man and his unexampled self-sacrifice. In this solemn and tense moment we swear that we also will forgo all human weaknesses and errors. The blood that was shed yesterday will purify all of us; it is the sacrifice, which we dedicate to fate, necessary to keep our magnificent movement pure."¹

This sickeningly sycophantic effusion only barely disguises the horror and fear of the writer. To kill one's oldest friends, "men with splendid pasts", could only be the act of a superhuman leader. But, with the acknowledgement that Hitler's mad slaughter of his friends is evidence of superhuman leadership comes the pathetic plea, born of the real horror evoked by the slaughter,

¹ Quoted by Wickham Steed in *The Meaning of Hitlerism*.

that the superhuman leadership "such as we have just witnessed can surely never be repeated". And in dread fear that a similar fate may reach him the writer swears that "we also will forgo all human weaknesses and errors. The blood that was shed yesterday will purify all of us". But, as we now know, the act of "superhuman leadership" was repeated. For before Hitler's bloodlust was satiated thousands were sacrificed. And, for all we know, those responsible for the above glorification of the vileness of June 30th, did not escape.

When Mussolini demanded "on pain of death or, worse, of suicide" a philosophy of Fascism, he must also have been expressing a need felt by many one-time opponents of Fascism. These latter must have also desired a "philosophical" justification of their conversions to Fascism. For they included many prominent erstwhile democrats who had long and bitterly fought against Mussolini but had capitulated with the promises of important positions in Mussolini's government. They could hardly have changed their innermost views of Mussolini, however much they consciously professed to admire him. Hence they felt the need for a theory of Fascism.

That they were practising a form of self-deception is amusingly illustrated by the following account given by a one-time Sardinian deputy, Emilio Lussu.¹ He describes a speech made by one Signor Pietro Lissia who became financial under-secretary in Mussolini's government. Lissia was previously a well-known member of the Social Democrat group in the Italian Senate, a fervent supporter of democratic institutions and in uncompromising opposition to Fascism.

At the meeting the audience, mindful of Lissia's democratic past, was extremely hostile to him, subjecting him to a constant barrage of interruptions. He finally lost control of himself and began threatening the audience in the name of Mussolini. But instead of saying "Mussolini",

¹ *Enter Mussolini*, by Emilio Lussu.

he upbraided the audience in the name of "Mussolino". The latter was the name of a notorious Calabrian brigand. A short time previously Lissia had, in private conversation with Lussu, declared that Mussolini should be outlawed. "Mussolini," he declared, "is a criminal and should be treated as such. I would say more: every citizen should be accorded the right to kill him with impunity as an act of self-defence." His reference to Mussolino, the bandit, is consequently one of those verbal slips which take place sometimes in the heat of the moment, when conscious attention is off guard, and the underlying intention and attitude seizes the opportunity for conscious expression. Mussolini is regarded as Mussolino, a criminal whom every citizen should have the right to kill "as an act of self-defence". And while this was the underlying attitude towards Mussolini of Signor Lissia, he none the less, in a later discussion with Signor Lussu, revealed an imposing array of arguments, arranged with a convincing symmetry, which justified his support of Mussolini on grounds which attempted to show that he was still a democrat "at heart".

Rationalisation, we see, is an important psychological device. It enables the performance of acts normally repugnant to conscious standards by finding reasons which justify those acts. There is hardly a deed too repulsive to contemplate, which somehow cannot be excused in this way. It is a terrible thought that the highest expression of human mental activity can be used to justify the most loathsome aspects of human behaviour. For the impulse to find reasons is a distinguishing characteristic of human life. In a healthy, socialised form it takes the shape of scientific enquiry into causes of natural phenomena. The rationalising faculty expresses itself on an objective plane by finding "reasons" which reflect the logic of reality. Or, in other words, the unconscious impulses which sustain and lie behind the active relation of man towards his environment are given a conscious expression which satisfies both the unconscious impulses

and the necessities of reality. The scientist, for example, in pursuing his investigations may subjectively be impelled by an unconscious revolt against his parents. In attempting to answer questions of scientific import, he may, symbolically, be asserting a right to knowledge which as a child he was forbidden by his parents. The normal curiosity which the child evinces in bodily functions, sex, birth, etc., may have been severely frowned upon by his parents so that the denial of knowledge comes to be associated with the power of his parents. Whatever the motives underlying the scientific quest for knowledge—the above, of course, is a purely hypothetical possibility—these motives are satisfied by the tackling of real, objective problems the solution of which are of social value. The scientist, subjectively, may be gratifying individual, unconscious impulses. Objectively and socially he is performing a very useful function. None the less it is a rationalisation when he advances the social value of his work as the reason for his interest in it. In fact it is only when the scientist becomes politically minded that he discovers that it is the social value of his science which motivates him. The average, unpolitically minded scientist (and he is in the majority in this country) invents a pure, disinterested motive, a knowledge for knowledge's sake, to cover the unconscious impulses which his science satisfies. In both cases the motives are unconscious and the social interest and epistemological disinterest, rationalisations. But the expression of unconscious impulses in science reflects the fact that reality compels man to deal with its problems, on pain of extinction; in other words, man has to take cognisance of reality considerations, when seeking gratifications for unconscious impulses, and we may describe this form of rationalisation as *objective rationalisation*.

Objective rationalisation demands that reality be faced courageously. Thus only can its problems be solved. But the problems to-day are such that their solution presupposes a revolutionary change in social structure, since

capitalist conditions of ownership and control debar the fullest use of scientific discoveries. Hence, capitalist politics, which seek to preserve these barriers to further scientific progress, retreat from reality considerations. Since reality can give no justification for the further continuance of capitalism, reality has to be subjected to a process of distortion. So that capitalist politics can only justify itself by appealing to a "philosophy" or "body of doctrines" which only in a fantastic way can be said to refer to an objective reality. The invention of a "philosophy" to justify the brutalities by which capitalism alone can maintain its existence is a species of *subjective* rationalisation. The "theories" of Fascism in only one sense may be said to have contact with external reality. They enable the Fascist leaders to indulge in sadistic orgies of terror and torture which are necessary for the objective continuance of capitalism. But these perverts strive to cover the naked sadistic character of their deeds with the fig-leaf of rationalisation. Every fact in the objective world is distorted to fit in with this need for rationalisation. Racial theories, State theories, etc., which are supposed to describe actual objective phenomena are nothing but expressions of the perverse character of their propounders. Hence a study of Fascist theory is a study in perversion. To study these "theories" we must see them primarily as rationalisations to disguise the expression of perversions of various kinds. To attempt to relate them to objective factors, beyond the political purpose they serve, is to miss their real significance. As R. P. Dutt expresses it: "The innocent may solemnly and painstakingly discuss at face value these miscellaneous 'theories' provided to suit all tastes. But in fact their importance is rather as symptoms and by-products of the real system and basis of Fascism than as its origin and *raison d'être*. The reality of Fascism is the violent attempt of decaying capitalism to defeat the proletarian revolution and forcibly arrest the growing contradictions of its whole development. All the rest is decoration and stage-play, whether conscious or

unconscious, to cover and make presentable or attractive this basic reactionary aim, which cannot openly be stated without defeating its purpose."

In the following chapters we shall attempt to relate some of the theories of Fascism to the underlying unconscious impulses which they mask. Not only do they serve the purpose of disguising the political aim of preserving a decaying capitalism. They also, as we have seen, serve the purpose of rationalising or justifying the sadistic cruelties of Fascist leaders.

Before passing to a consideration of some theories of Fascism to reveal their unconscious motives, there is a point which needs emphasising. While the purpose of the following chapters is to reveal the perverse character of the impulses which are glorified in the Fascist theories, it must be understood that a distinction is made between the Fascist leaders and "intellectuals" who enunciate these theories and the masses of people who believe them. These theories are often set out in the most idealistic of language, appealing to sentiments of selflessness, service to the community, heroism, etc., which belie their real purposes. Also they make play with revolutionary phrases in such a way that the inarticulate and uncritical revolt which lies deep in the heart of all the victims of capitalism, responds eagerly. Consider, for example, the following definition of Fascist virtues. "The Fascist virtues are tenacity at work, the extreme parsimony of gesture and word; physical and moral courage; absolute loyalty in personal relations; firmness in decisions; affection for comrades; hatred for enemies of the Revolution and the Fatherland; unlimited faithfulness to an oath that has been taken; respect for tradition, and at the same time, the desire of accomplishment for the morrow."¹

The above list is typical of the call which Fascist propagandists make on the best and noblest feelings of mankind.

¹ *Almanac of the Fascist Association of Elementary School Teachers*, 1934, p. 92.

People who have not attained to any degree of political clarity of thought; who, none-the-less, are eager to serve the community, have seen in Fascism the means of service. This is one of the darkest crimes of Fascism. It has discovered how to use the forces of idealism for the purpose of preserving the putrefying corpse of capitalism. In a forceful letter, typical of his deep understanding and sympathy, Romain Rolland calls attention to this fact. It is a letter warning the youth of France against the falsehoods and deceits of Fascism.

"*There* is the danger. The mortal danger. All these youths, ardent, blinded, hot-headed, imagine themselves to be fighting for the ideal, and the interest of the community. They will wake up, to find themselves enslaved, and in the grip of high capitalism.

"The adventure is not, however, a new one. Those who have already seen it unfold in Italy and in Germany should know by now. Here, as there, the same solemn promises to serve the cause of the social community. The same fraud. Words, words; liberal tongues which promise reforms that are never carried out except on paper. But still the Grand Fascist Council and the Duce in Italy, in Germany the monstrous pair Hitler-Thyssen, continue to exploit the trustful and enchained people. Open their eyes for them, comrades. Do not be content with fighting them. Enlighten them. If in the ranks of the business men and manufacturers there are thousands of mercenaries, if there are also battalions of fanatical reactionaries with whom all reasoning is futile, *there are thousands of fine fellows who are being duped, who have no suspicion that they are being played with, that they are being armed, that they are being sent to fight those very things which they believe themselves to be defending.*"¹

In Britain to-day too few attempts are made to combat this base exploitation of the idealistic notions of many Fascists. If we desire to win these "ardent, blinded, hot-headed" supporters from Fascism, our approach must be

¹ Romain Rolland, *I Will Not Rest*.

made in the light of sympathetic understanding. At the moment, too often the reaction to the individual rank-and-file Fascist is one of extreme personal antagonism. It is forgotten that he is the deluded victim of capitalist wiliness and is only confirmed in his attitude by unnecessary hostility. We must not allow our antagonism towards capitalism to be diverted towards the victims of Fascist demagoguery. Our task is to explain, whenever possible, patiently and understandingly, why Fascism cannot achieve the ideals in which the individual may believe.

For example, a manifesto, or open letter, should be issued to the Fascists, distributed at their meetings, handed to individuals and published in the workers' Press. This manifesto, preferably written by a one-time Fascist who has become disillusioned, should explain that certain of the ideals held by Fascists are far from being opposed by revolutionaries. And then an endeavour should be made to show how unattainable these ideals are, how, in the words of Rolland, Fascists "are being sent to fight those very things which they believe themselves to be defending". One simple, psychological fact once grasped would, I believe, have a tremendous effect in furthering such a campaign. It is that a basis of agreement must always be found if an individual is to be won over to one's own point of view. To approach a person in a spirit of opposition is to drive him further away. To agree with him in his objectives, and then to show how such objectives are unattainable through Fascism, will at least leave him uncertain. And it is worth noting that such a method is being used by the Italian Communists in their approach to rank-and-file Fascists. The 1919 programme of the Italian Fascists embodies all the hopes and aims which fired the first Fascist organisations. According to a manifesto published in *International Press Correspondence*, the Italian Communists are now proposing unity to the Fascists *on the basis of the 1919 programme*. In other words they are *agreeing* with the desirability of the aims therein mentioned and are indicating their willingness to work

for them. This, at the same time, is a well thought out tactical blow at Fascism. For Fascism has no intention of realising those aims, has never had any intention to do so, and any agitation for their realisation is simultaneously a struggle against Fascism. No clearer expression of the lack of intention to fulfil the promises made exists than these words of Gentile, which have already been quoted: "It (Fascism) has often announced reforms when the announcement was politically opportune, but to the execution of which it, nevertheless, did not believe itself to be obliged."

We must not, therefore, regard Fascism as an example of the general perversity of the peoples who have succumbed to it. It is an evidence of the political and cultural decadence of the minority within the society, the capitalist ruling class. Such a class finds its support increasingly in the relatively few degenerates who head the ranks of the Fascist parties. But, to a great extent, the support of Fascism not only shows the depths of hate and bitterness which are accumulated within a capitalist system of general deprivation, in the minds of the afflicted masses. It also, paradoxically, shows the degree of self-sacrifice, and capacity for devoted service which likewise exist in the average person. Psycho-analysis may show that people are more immoral than they suspect. But it also shows that they are much more moral than they know. So far from destroying every hope of Socialism, Fascism, in some respects, gives an additional guarantee of its inevitability. For Fascist demagogues are compelled to recognise this upward thrust for Socialism. They recognise it in a way, no doubt, which incenses every clear-thinking Socialist by associating the term Socialism with all manner of doctrines repugnant to the Socialist mind. But, none-the-less, this distorted use of Socialist propaganda is a striking evidence of the development of a Socialist consciousness. For no one can doubt that capitalism, in decline, would prefer to speak as little as possible of its successor, already jostling on its heels as a result of the

triumphs of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. But the shadow of Socialism is cast over it, and the reality threatens to emerge from the gloom of capitalism's last days. Hence the panic-stricken offers of substitutes for the reality, the sham of Fascism and National Socialism, is, in itself, a testimony to the fear which the nearness of Socialism inspires. Socialism is inevitable. The very fear which inspires the capitalists to offer sham Socialisms to the workers proclaims its inevitability. But before the Socialist and Communist there is a long long road, a road which requires patience, understanding and sympathy for our fellow travellers. They have temporarily lost their bearings through the false guidance of Fascist National Socialism. To guide them aright we must not be too bitter in our condemnations, too intolerant of their credulities.

CHAPTER XV

RACIAL THEORY

THE EXALTATION OF one's own country above all other nations is, we saw, a prominent feature of Fascist propaganda. It enables the diversion of aggressive impulses towards other nations who are represented as menacing the greatness of one's own nation. All the economic woes from which one's nation is suffering are laid at the door of the foreigners who are evilly plotting to defraud one's own nation of its rightful place in the sun. By contemplating the greatness of one's own nation, the individual who has suffered hardship and poverty can derive a sense of importance which compensates for his sufferings.

This sense of importance, derived from an identification with one's country, has its psychological roots in the narcissistic stage of sexual development. In this stage the self is taken as the object of love. The child has developed an awareness of its own existence as a separate individual and glories in his new-found self by boisterous, cruel and exhibitionistic behaviour. He wants to make others recognise his importance, to feel his power, and to admire him. In the same way, the frenzied nationalism which is developed in Fascist countries manifests these narcissistic characteristics. For the national glorification is a form of self-glorification, a displacement of the infantile self-love.

In a well-balanced adult the infantile self-love impulses will find sublimated expression in a number of socially acceptable ways. He might, for example, project this narcissism on to his work in which he then takes a great pride, identifying it unconsciously with himself. Or he might, as previously mentioned, identify himself with the individuals of his nation who have made great contributions to world culture and progress and thereby feel a

glow of pride. The expression which he gives to his self-love in this way, takes a form which does not conflict with social welfare. These forms of expression are remote from the primitive exuberance of childhood and denote the adult mind which is able to face reality and exercise a control over its infantile impulses. But when the adult mind begins to flinch in the face of a reality which presents it with insoluble problems, the psychological process of regression takes place. One feature of this regression is that self-pride can no longer be maintained by real accomplishments in the external world. For regression is the result of inadequacy in face of the external world. Hence recourse has to be made to more primitive modes of maintaining self-pride, a recourse to the boisterous exhibitionism of infantile days.

Thus, we can understand the fanatical nationalistic feelings provoked by reactionary propaganda as due to the regression to an infantile self-love. It is a phenomenon in all Fascist countries, though differing in form according to the national traditions which can be seized upon by Fascist propagandists and used for purposes of national intoxication. In Italy, for example, Mussolini has exploited to the full the traditions of ancient Rome and urged the Italian people to think once more of reviving the glory of the Roman Empire. He has introduced what is declared to be the Roman salute and the old Roman designations for army ranks. "We dream," says Mussolini, "of a Roman Italy, that is to say, wise and strong, disciplined and imperial. Much of that which was the immortal spirit of Rome resurges in Fascism; Roman are the Lictor's Rods, Roman our fighting organisation, Roman our pride and our courage; *Civis romanus sum*."

There is no difficulty in seeing the relationship between this mode of narcissistic behaviour and the infantile impulses to self-love from which it springs. That one gains in self-importance in the measure that one's country makes itself feared internationally is an elementary psychological fact that needs no elaboration. It is of course

a characteristic of a primitive level of mentality, for a more adult expression would be, as we have seen, a pride in the cultural achievements which had gained fame for one's country.

But when we turn to the other great Fascist country, Germany, we find a slightly different, and more complex, form of this self-intoxication. In this case the emphasis is upon the greatness of the race to which the Germans belong. The various legends concerning the valorous deeds of the barbaric Germanic tribes have been linked with the myth of an Aryan race. The Aryans, according to this myth, are a superior race of people to whom culture and civilisation owe their best features. They possess creative powers which qualify them to assume the leadership of other races. This myth first found literary form in the work of a French diplomatist, Count de Gobineau, on the inequality of races. Gobineau maintained that the decay of civilisations was not to be explained, as hitherto, on grounds of luxurious living of the upper classes. The decay of civilisations was a genetic result; for the superior race failed to keep its blood pure, but intermingled it with the blood of lesser races. The decline of all civilisations was due to the lowering of the quality of the blood of the natural rulers through intermarriage. Needless to say, the superior race was the Aryan. This "theory" was adopted and elaborated by an Englishman, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who discovered in the Teutons, whose modern descendants are the Germans, the purest existing representatives of the Aryan race. So enamoured was he of this discovery that he renounced his English nationality and became a naturalised German.

What basis has this myth in fact?

The term Aryan which came into general currency through the works of a brilliant philologist, Max Müller (1823-1900), was intended to refer to a group of Indo-European languages having common roots and therefore a hypothetical common origin. At first, it is true, Müller

thought that there had existed an Aryan race somewhere in Central Asia. But he later corrected this erroneous conception of an Aryan race and emphasised that the term had a philological meaning only. "Aryas," he wrote, "are those who speak Aryan languages, whatever their colour, whatever their blood. In calling them Aryas we predicate nothing of them except that the grammar of their language is Aryan."¹ Further, "I have declared again and again that if I say Aryas, I mean neither blood nor bones, nor hair nor skull; I mean simply those who speak an Aryan language. . . To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic dictionary or a brachycephalic grammar."²

Hence, beyond this philological use, the word Aryan has no scientific meaning. Nor is there good evidence that northern and central Europe was originally inhabited by the Nordic people described by Tacitus. According to Tacitus: " . . . the peoples of Germany are untainted by intermarriage with others, a peculiar people and pure, like no one but themselves. Hence their physique, despite their vast numbers, is identical: fierce blue eyes, red hair, tall frames, powerful only spasmodically and impatient at the same time of labour and hardwork, and by no means habituated to bearing thirst or heat, yet accustomed, thanks to the climate and soil, to cold and hunger."

Commenting on this passage the distinguished scientists, A. C. Haddon and Julian S. Huxley, observe: "This passage is the ultimate origin of the 'Nordic legend', the idea that the original inhabitants of northern and central Europe were all of this particular type. Historical and archæological investigation, however, has failed to support Tacitus. It may be noted that red hair is rare among modern Germans, save among those of Jewish origin."³

¹ Max Müller, *Biographies of Words and the Home of the Aryas*, p. 245.

² *ibid.*, p. 120.

³ J. S. Huxley and A. S. Haddon, *We Europeans*, p. 36.

Such scientific considerations, however, carry little weight with the racial "theorists". Just as Mussolini has need of an idealised Roman past in order to stimulate the vainglory of the Italian people, so the modern racial "experts" of Germany have fastened on this fantastic theory of the superior racial heritage of the German people. Below I give an authoritative expression of this theory, from which the reader may judge for himself whether "fantastic" is an overstatement.

In a text-book widely circulated in Germany the following appears:

"The non-Nordic man's teeth roots are more diagonally set than those of the animal, owing to the prominent snoutiness of his upper jaw.

"Nordic man chews his food with his mouth closed by a grinding movement of his jaws, whereas other races tend to chew with a smacking noise like animals, owing to the pressing movement of the jaws.

"But the Nordic mouth is able to do still more. Just as red colour is of an inciting nature, so is the light red mouth of the North inciting; it incites to kissing and through that to wooing.

"Whereas the broad thick-lipped mouth of the non-Nordic expresses sensual lust, malicious and false grinning and pleasure yearning.

"Talking with hands and feet indicates the non-Nordic. The Nordic stands quiet when talking, he may even put his hands into his pockets.

"An outspoken sense of shame is only evident in Nordic morals, where already the genitals are called: shame. The dark-skinned people are hardly able to blush even externally. The Nordic possesses a feeling for internal and external cleanliness, while the non-Nordic always lives in dirt if he is amongst his own people.

"The non-Nordic man occupies an intermediate position between Nordic man and animal, he comes next to the man-apes. He is therefore not a 100 per cent human being; he is, in fact, not a human being at all, if compared

with the animal, but merely an intermediary, a link. But better and more accurate, is the description 'Inferior man'."¹

Strangely enough, however, the most fervent exponents of the racial superiority of the Aryan-Nordic-Germanic type, are physically the furthest removed from the idealised ancestry. "Our German neighbours," observe Professors Haddon and Huxley sardonically, "have ascribed to themselves a Teutonic type that is fair, long-headed, tall and virile. Let us make a composite picture of a typical Teuton from the most prominent exponents of this view. Let him be as blond as Hitler, as dolichocephalic as Rosenberg, as tall as Goebels, as slender as Goering, and as manly as Streicher. How much would he resemble the German ideal?"²

Nor is it an accident that it is just those who least resemble the idealised picture of an Aryan ancestry who are most prominent in propagating racial "theories". For these racial "theories" are based upon the postulate of the natural inequality of races, and without exception the racial theorist belongs to the superior race. In other words, only the fact of the deep feelings of individual inferiority could impel individuals to expound a theory of their own racial superiority which has so little basis in science. The Aryan and Nordic "theories" are obvious overcompensations for inferiority complexes. They are put forward by individuals who are inwardly prey to the most urgent feelings of inferiority. They are rationalisations to mask an inner inferiority. We discussed the existence of deep feelings of inferiority in Hitler and showed how his bitter hatred of the Jews is related thereto. His racial theory gives an intellectual cover for this extreme sexual envy of the Jews. By means of it he is able to deny, in consciousness, that his feelings towards the Jews are determined by envy and inferiority. He is able, on the

¹ Hermann Gauch, *Neue Grundlagen der Rassenforschung. New Fundamentals of Anthropology.*

² *ibid.*, p. 26.

contrary, to regard himself as objectively justified in his vilifications of the Jews. The Aryan theory permits him to indulge in savage persecutions of these people, and, simultaneously, to enjoy feelings of self-glorification. For, by charging the Jews with having, historically, played the rôle of "race defilers", he is able to concur in the persecution of the Jewish people, with the gratifying feeling of one who saves his own race from destruction.

Let us consider, then, Hitler's own version of the Aryan theory, in the light of these psychological implications.

He begins his account with the bombastic assertion that, "All we admire on this earth—science, etc., technical skill and invention—is the creative product of only a small number of nations, and originally, perhaps, of one single race. All this culture depends on them for its very existence. If they are ruined, they carry with them all the beauty of this earth into the grave."¹ To this boast we would append the terse comments of Professors Haddon and Huxley.

"What are the facts? The fundamental discoveries on which civilisation is built are the art of writing, agriculture, the wheel, and building in stone. All these appear to have originated in the Near East, among peoples who by no stretch of imagination could be called Nordic or presumed to have but the faintest admixture of Nordic or even Proto-Nordic genes."²

The human race is divided by Hitler into three categories, "founders, maintainers and destroyers of culture—the Aryan stock alone can be considered as representing the first categories". The mode of creating cultures is as follows. The Aryans first of all overthrow other nations and compel them to work under their control and according to their will. So long as the Aryan conquerors maintain their blood purity they also retain their dominance over the subjugated peoples. They develop and create cultures suitable for the character of the people they have

¹*My Struggle*, English edition, p. 121.

² Professors Haddon and Huxley, *We Europeans*, p. 94.

conquered, giving the latter "an existence better than their former so-called freedom".

But in the course of time the "conquerors sin against the principle of keeping the blood pure . . . and begin to blend with the original inhabitants". This, says Hitler, is the cause of the decline of civilisations. "Blood mixture and the lowering of the racial level which accompanies it, are the one and only cause why old civilisations disappear. It is not lost wars which ruin mankind, but the loss of the powers of resistance, which belong to purity of blood alone." At this juncture Hitler brings in the Jews. For their rôle in his racial theory is the "destroyer of culture". "The exact opposite of the Aryan is the Jew." The Jew is needed to explain why the modern descendants of the "Aryans" the Hitlers, Streichers, Rosenbergs, etc., have so little to contribute to modern culture. The Jew "guided by nothing more nor less than pure selfseeking" has insinuated himself among the superior Aryan nations. Because of the "idealistic" character of the Aryan the Jew has been tolerated, with the result that he has been enabled to corrupt the superior Aryan culture and cause the destruction of its civilisation.

"The Jew," says a Nazi proclamation, "is the cause and beneficiary of our national slavery. He ruined our race, rotted our morals, hollowed out our way of life and broke our strength." "With the awakening to the menace which the Jew constitutes, the Aryan race will relentlessly pluck the Jew from its midst and preserve thereby its racial purity and strength."

Such is the Hitlerite racial "theory". It revolves around the menace which Jewish racial "defilement" constitutes. It is a barely disguised expression of sexual envy. For the bitterest charge against the Jew is his persistence and virility in spite of continued persecution. "In hardly any nation in the world," exclaimed Hitler, "is the instinct of self-preservation more strongly developed than in the 'chosen people'. . . . How their determined will to live and to maintain the type is expressed by these facts!"

It is this virility expressing itself in every sphere of life which excites the envy of the racial theorist. The Jew haunts his imagination. He is unconsciously identified with his own powerful father before whom, as a child, he likewise felt inferior. Here we can see how the Aryan theory is, for Hitler, another expression of his identification with God. By means of the theory of racial superiority, Hitler is able to identify himself with his glorious Aryan ancestors. This is precisely what takes place in the case of the identification with God. For, as we saw, this feeling that one is God arises from the identification of the individual with a magnified conception of the father held by the infantile mind. Thus the mythical Aryan ancestors, responsible for art and science, are merely the projection of Hitler's father image, with which he proceeds to identify himself. But we already have said that the Jews also are identified by Hitler and other racial theorists with the father. How, then, can we say that Hitler's super-ego is identified with his Aryan ancestry? The answer, of course, is that the attitude towards the father is a strongly ambivalent one. Hence, the Jew is identified with the cruel and despotic father, while the Aryan receives all the virtues which the protective rôle of the father deserves. The *revolt* against the father, therefore, is expressed in anti-Semitism, while the *identification* with the father is expressed in Aryanism. Incidentally, we can discern the challenge to the father in the fact that Aryanism seems to be an inverted Judaism. For all the claims of the Jews to racial purity are repeated by the "Aryans". Actually the Jews as well as other peoples are the product of a complicated process of interbreeding spread over centuries. There are black Jews, yellow Jews, dark, fair, doxycephalic, brachycephalic, etc., etc., defying reduction to any specific racial characteristics.

To sum up. We see from the foregoing that, by means of spurious racial theories, the Fascist leaders can find intellectual justification for the tortures by which they gratify⁴ their sadistic impulses. The national and racial

glorification excites the primitive self-love of the people and converts it into the swagger and strut of imperialist ambition. Mussolini relies for the excitement of these infantile impulses on the past glories of Rome. Hitler holds out to the German people the glories of their Aryan ancestry. In both cases, they are serving the needs of capitalism in decline. Both national exaltation and racial intoxication serve to stimulate the aggression which capitalism requires for the prosecution of war. "The violent racialism," observe Professors Haddon and Huxley, in concluding their valuable study of European racial origin, "to be found in Europe to-day, is a symptom of Europe's exaggerated nationalism. . . . Racialism is a myth and a dangerous myth at that. It is a cloak for selfish economic aims which in their uncloaked nakedness would look ugly enough."¹

Thus we see the coincidence between the economic needs of capitalism for an aggressive nationalism, and the subjective needs of Fascist leaders. The envy and hate-distorted minds of Fascist leaders compel them to spread theories fantastically remote from fact which, none the less, serve the purpose of preparing the aggressive psychology which capitalism needs. The subjective impulses of the Fascist leaders fit the objective needs of a decaying capitalism. That is why they alone can fulfil the political tasks which such a system requires of its leaders. An "unnatural selection" has been at work!

¹ *We Europeans*, p. 267.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TOTALITARIAN STATE

IN THIS CHAPTER, I propose to discuss the totalitarian theory of the State. But it will first of all be necessary to consider certain economic and psychological characteristics of States, in general.

In a class society, the State is the instrument by which the economically dominant class secures its privileged position. The existence of the State is evidence of the fact that the classes in society are in irreconcilable opposition. Hence there is the need for some means by which the will of the privileged economic class may prevail. These means are summated in the State. The State, says Engels, is not some "power imposed on society from outside". Nor is it "the image and reality of reason", an independent, unbiased power, dispensing justice in accordance with eternal principles, favouring no particular class, but seeking only to reconcile conflicting interests in the general interests of society. "Rather," says Engels, "it is the product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, may not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society becomes necessary, whose purpose is to moderate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of 'order'; and this power arising out of society, but placing itself above it, and increasingly separating itself from it, is the State."

In modern society the economically dominant class is the capitalist class. Its privileged position is based upon its monopoly of the means of production and its conse-

quent appropriation of the products of production. Hence the State in a capitalist society is the means by which the capitalist class preserves its privileged position. This has always been the function of the State; namely the preservation of the privileged economic position of a class. "The antique State was, therefore, the State of the slave owners for the purpose of holding the slaves in check. The feudal State was the organ of the nobility for the oppression of the serfs and the dependent farmers. The modern representative State is the tool of the capitalist exploiters of wage labour. . . In most of the historical States, the rights of the citizens are differentiated according to their wealth. This is a direct confirmation of the fact that the State is organised for the protection of the possessing against the non-possessing class."¹

That the State does in fact operate on behalf of the dominant economic class becomes clear whenever there is a serious conflict between the classes. For at such a time the whole weight of the State apparatus is brought to bear on behalf of the dominant class. We saw this during the General Strike of 1926 in England. Then, there was a major conflict between the owning classes and the non-owning. The whole of the forces of the State were marshalled against the strikers. They were condemned as threatening the community, harassed by the police, while the forces of the military stood by, awaiting the possible sharpening of the conflict. Never was it clearer that the community which the State safeguarded was the community of the interests of the capitalist class. An American instance of the identification of the State with the interests of the capitalist class, is given by H. J. Laski. A section of the National Industrial Recovery Act entitles the workers in an industry to decide whether to be represented in their negotiations with the employers, either by the notorious company unions or the ordinary trade unions. The company unions are controlled by the employers themselves, which naturally

¹ *The Origin of the Family*, pp. 208-9.

made it highly desirable, for the employers, for the negotiations with the workers to be carried on through their agency. In July 1934, a general strike broke out in San Francisco. The workers employed by the dock and shipping companies had overwhelmingly chosen to be represented by the non-company transport unions, in accordance with the existing law. But the dock and shipping companies refused to recognise the transport unions. The strike, therefore, was to enforce a legal right granted to the workers by the N.I.R.A.

"The strike collapsed after four days; and it collapsed because, in the name of law and order, all the energies of the State government were devoted to defeating its objectives. It did not matter that the strikers were seeking to secure a right deliberately conferred upon them by law. It did not matter, either, that by refusing to recognise the transport unions the employers of San Francisco were, quite consciously, evading an obligation imposed upon them by law also. It did not matter, finally, that it is the thesis of American law that it is applied equally and indifferently to all persons, whether employers or employed, since the courts of law are, by definition of the State-purpose, neutral between them. . . . 'A general strike,' said Mr. Hugh Johnson, the administrator charged with the application of the National Industrial Recovery Act, 'is a threat to the community, a menace to the Government, civil war and bloody insurrection.'"¹

But the State does not depend solely on the use of coercive measures. The State ordinarily depends on creating a submissive attitude in the mass of the people, on persuading them to recognise its authority. Its coercive forces are reserved for those refractory elements who have challenged its authority. As we shall see later, a State which depended solely or almost solely upon repression and coercion would very quickly cease to exist. Its strength lies rather in the hold which it has on the minds of the people. For this reason the question of why

¹ *The State in Theory and Practice*, pp. 136-7.

the people obey the State has a psychological interest. This question brings us to a consideration of the general psychological factors involved in the relation between the State and the people.

One answer to this question is that the State is obeyed because individuals perceive some personal advantage in obeying. That is to say, the individual submits to State authority on rational, utilitarian, grounds, because on balance he receives more from the State in service, than he forgoes by obedience to its demands. Thus Professor Laski suggests that men "do not obey the authority of the State" for the sake of obedience. "They obey it for the purposes they believe to be secured by its operations. They submit to orders for the sake of what they believe these orders to imply. They scrutinise those orders in terms of the satisfactions they seek from life, and from time to time they reject them upon the ground that they are a denial of those satisfactions. Obedience, that is to say, is the normal habit of mankind; but marginal cases continually recur in which the decision to disobey is painfully taken and passionately defended".¹ In this case, obedience is considered as the "normal habit of mankind", though, strangely enough, men do not obey that authority for the sake of obedience. They weigh matters up in terms of "satisfactions" and then decide whether to indulge in the habit of obedience. There seems to be a confusion here arising from the ambiguous use of the term "habit". For a survey of social life would reveal that men respond to the authority of the State without overmuch question, in an automatic, uncritical manner which may loosely be described as "habitual". But this is to recognise the existence of a psychological factor which is responsible for the uncritical level of the habit of obedience. We find, for example, that long after the State is able to give the maximum satisfactions to the people their habit of obedience remains little shaken. Or, in other words, the authority of the ruling class lingers

¹ *The State in Theory and Practice* p. 17.

long after the ruling class has fulfilled its historical purpose. Hence when Professor Laski calls attention to the marginal cases where the decision to disobey is taken, he is, at the same time, proclaiming that the "decision" to continue obeying persists for the great majority.

In other words, while we may agree that the perception of economic satisfactions, which the State may guarantee, is a factor in men's willingness to obey it, there are obviously other factors, of a less rational nature, which account for the persistence of this obedience long after the State is able to guarantee these economic satisfactions. The Fascist States in Italy and Germany, we have seen, not only are incapable of increasing the amount of economic satisfactions for the majority of the people. They are actually withdrawing many of those satisfactions. As a result, of course, the margin of revolt is greater and therefore the means of repression are increased; but the persisting loyalty of wide masses of people points to the existence of irrational, psychological factors. Let us consider these factors.

The obedience which the people give to the State is due, from the psychological point of view, to the fact that it is the father-substitute. The State, in other words, is cloaked with the authority of the father as he appears to the child. Hence the irrational features of loyalty and obedience towards the State, when clearly the State is incapable of giving economic satisfactions, are due to its rôle as father-substitute.

How else can we explain this irrational allegiance to an outworn State? While, economically, the State reflects the division of society into contending classes and the need to maintain "order" between these classes, this order would be impossible without the existence of psychological factors. A State has to surround itself with prestige and can only successfully maintain its rôle if it appears to the bulk of society as an unchallengeable and omnipotent force. These are precisely the qualities ascribed by the infantile mind to the father and which

prepare the way for the largely uncritical acceptance of the State by the majority of people.

The psychological relationship to the State, however, can only remain stable so long as the individual feels that the State, as the father, loves each equally. This is an important condition of State existence and is a reproduction of the family situation. For it is well known that when parents begin to show favour to one child in preference to another, they sow the seeds of family discord. Likewise when the disparities in the treatment of sections of the community become acute, rebelliousness grows. When economic inequalities become glaring, the badly treated section tends to murmur. It is well known that absolute poverty itself does not provoke revolt. For mankind has lived in absolute, but equally shared, poverty for the greater part of its existence, the poverty of primitive Communism. It is the contrasts between classes in society, between the privileged and unprivileged, which excite revolutionary passions. "The ability of a State to win the loyalty of its citizens," observes Professor Laski, "depends on its power continuously to soften the contrast."

Hence, so long as the members of society feel that, however hard their lot, it is equally shared, they will feel little impulse to revolt. That is one reason why the Russian people suffered uncomplainingly the difficulties of the early revolutionary days. They did not feel that they were being discriminated against in favour of a privileged sect. All shared equally in the hardships. Even our own National Government was able successfully to appeal to an equality of sacrifice. By prominently displaying the fact that even Cabinet Ministers had consented to a reduction in view of the "national emergency" the illusion of a general sacrifice was created. In capitalist countries therefore it is necessary, psychologically, to soften the real harshness of class divisions by pretending that the State makes equal demands upon all. The State shows no favour to any section and, like a father, adjudges

wisely and fairly between its children. This is the psychological reason for the illusion that the State is above classes. For so long as this illusion of equality of State treatment can be maintained, the State retains its psychological hold.

Hence we must conclude that the habit of obedience to the State persists largely on irrational grounds. Men obey the State, not because they have weighed the economic satisfactions to be procured thereby, but because they are responding to the irrational compulsions of the infantile conception of the father.

Such are the psychological factors upon which a State depends.

The State, it is true, needs to have at its disposal the means to enforce its authority, the powers of coercion. But this should not mislead us into thinking that the submissiveness to the State is only a product of the threat of coercion. For the coercive powers of a State alone would never be a sufficient basis for State control. The purpose of these powers of coercion is to subdue the marginal cases of insubordination of which Professor Laski speaks. But a State which depended wholly, or almost wholly, on such means would be in a very precarious position. It would signify that the bulk of the people had lost their "habit" of obedience, were, in fact, rebellious. The State in such circumstances would have lost its prestige and authority derived from the psychological rôle of father-substitute and could not long persist. If it wished to regain a new lease of life it would have to seek some means of recapturing its lost prestige, of winning back the voluntary submission of the people.

No clearer example of this exists than the formation of the Nazi Government. The German ruling class had depended upon Social Democracy to retain the passive obedience of the masses to the State. But with the discredit into which democracy fell, the German ruling class sought for some other means of assuring the passivity of the masses. It sought, in other words, to strengthen the

psychological basis without which no State can function for long. It discovered the means to this in the Nazi Party. For the latter had a sufficiently large following among the masses to give the capitalist State the necessary psychological basis, while allowing it to turn to the task of crushing the margin of revolt, expressed in the parties of the left, in comparative safety. Hitler had wisely not neglected to establish good relations with the army as the supreme coercive force. His party therefore presented itself to the capitalist class as the most suitable to retain the prestige of the capitalist State, at the time when this prestige was fast disappearing.

This illustrates the decisive importance of psychological factors in the maintenance of States. For if States depended largely on coercion rather than upon psychological factors, the German capitalists could very easily have instituted a military dictatorship, and attempted to force the people into submission. They would, however, have provoked a wave of revolutionary opposition such as would have submerged the German ruling class. But the German capitalists were far too intelligent to make such a mistake. They provided themselves with the primary basis upon which all States depend, namely, a submission to authority based upon a psychological attachment to a leader or a party. The wisdom of the German capitalists in this respect is shown by the *Deutsche Fuhrerbriefe* issued as confidential bulletins by the Federation of German Industry during 1932. The rôle of Social Democracy is discussed in these bulletins and clearly understood as a means of avoiding the dangers of using military force, while "anchoring" the people to capitalist rule. The leading bourgeoisie "require for this rule, if they do not wish to rely on the extremely dangerous weapon of purely military force, an alliance with strata which do not belong to them socially, *but which render them the indispensable service of anchoring their rule in the people*, and thereby being the actual and final bearers of this rule. This last or 'outermost bearer' of bourgeois rule was, in the first period of

post-war consolidation, Social Democracy".¹ But Social Democracy, we saw in the first part of this book, proves in the end incompatible with a period of capitalist decline. The concessions in hours, wages, etc., by which Social Democracy is able to justify itself to the workers and thus gain their support for the capitalist State, are no longer possible during a period of acute crisis and decline. The achievements in wages and living conditions, permitted in a bourgeois democratic régime, not only may not be augmented during such a period but must be ruthlessly attacked. Hence, if the capitalists are to retain their hold on the minds of the people they must devise a method which does not depend, as does Social Democracy, on continued expansion in the standards of the workers.

Hence it is noted in the *Deutsche Fuhrerbriefe* that, "The process of the transition which we are undergoing at present, because the economic crisis necessarily destroys these achievements, passes through the stage of acute danger that, with the disappearance of these achievements, the mechanism of disrupting the working class which is based upon these achievements will cease to operate, with the result that the working class will begin to turn in the direction of Communism and the bourgeois rule will be faced with the necessity of setting up a military dictatorship. This stage would mark the beginning of the phase of the incurable sickness of bourgeois rule. As the old sluice mechanism can no longer be sufficiently restored, the only possible means of saving bourgeois rule from this abyss is to effect the splitting of the working class and its tying to the State apparatus by other and more direct means. Herein lie the positive possibilities and the tasks of National Socialism".²

Having now considered certain general economic and psychological characteristics of the State, we can turn to a more specific consideration of the Fascist State.

¹ Quoted by R. P. Dutt, in *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 151. My italics.

² *ibid.*, pp. 152-3.

In other chapters we have discussed how Fascism has obtained its hold over millions of minds. It has won the acquiescence of the masses in Italy and Germany by a clever play on the primitive emotions of the people. It has known how to divert the natural hostility of the workers to capitalist deprivation into channels of national and racial hatred. And it has successfully exploited the loss of faith in their own abilities which revolutionary defeat has brought to the masses. It is erroneous, therefore, to think of Fascism as only the terroristic régime of the capitalists. It combines extreme terror against revolutionary workers and progressive organisations with an intensive propaganda to arouse popular feeling in its favour. It takes extraordinary pains to work up popular feeling even to the extent of falsifying election returns and thus creating an illusion of widespread support. A humorous example of this is given by Francisco Nitti, ex-Prime Minister of Italy. "One of my friends, an old man, who presided at a polling-station, could not prevent Fascist acts of violence. But when he saw a young man under twenty in a black shirt, who had voted more than forty times with different ballot papers and was finally voting with one belonging to an old man of eighty, he had to content himself with a smile of ironic benevolence, saying: 'I must congratulate you. You have kept marvelously fit. You do not in the least look like a man a good deal older than myself.'"

We may say, therefore, that the capitalist State, whether democratic or Fascist, relies upon two methods to assure mass acquiescence in its rule. In the first case, it requires the loyalty of a wide mass of people, and, in the second case, it employs violent methods against recalcitrant elements. It obtains loyalty by means of the propaganda machine, the Press, schools, radio, etc., through which it disguises the real, class nature of the State. The State is identified with the general interests of the community. It is spoken of in grandiose terms as embodying the general will of the people. The political leaders are

presented as individuals with no other concern than the welfare of the nation as a whole. In psychological terms, the father assures the children that he loves them all equally. They all have the same importance in his eyes.

The Fascist State differs, however, from the democratic State in the degree of coercion it uses against refractory elements and the intensity of the propaganda whereby it seeks to win the acceptance and acquiescence of the masses in its rule. It has to deprive the workers of any organisational rights, of any voice, and to crush the growing margin of revolt. It can only do this by strengthening the allegiance of the uncritical elements of society to the State. The State has to acquire a prestige and authority before which the individual feels dwarfed and insignificant. Only then can it demand unquestioning obedience and compel an irrational loyalty. For the mass of the people the Fascist State is the leader, the Duce or Führer. To him, we have seen, they look trustingly for salvation, and not to some abstract State authority. They are not concerned with elaborate disquisitions on the nature of the State. It is represented for them, concretely, in the persons of the Duce or the Führer. But for those who wield autocratic power on behalf of the capitalist class, and for those who, like many one-time Social Democrats, entertain some intellectual qualms concerning the claims of Hitler and Mussolini to be divinely inspired, for such as those a "theory" of the State is an intellectual necessity. They must give the authoritative rôle of the Fascist leaders a "theoretical" garb before they can acquiesce, with mental comfort, in the brutalities and tyrannies of Fascism. For then they can regard these things as measures of stern discipline, necessary to preserve the sovereignty of the State.

The intellectual cloaking of the brutal purposes of Fascism is achieved by the totalitarian theory of the State. According to it, the State is all-important. The members of the nation exist only in and by the State. Apart from the State there are no private or individual

rights, the whole life of the individual is subordinate to its purposes. "The foundation of Fascism," says Mussolini, "is the conception of the State, its character, its duty and its aim. Fascism conceives of the State as an absolute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative. . . . Whoever says Fascism implies the State."¹

A German writer defines the Totalitarian State as follows: "The State is becoming total and embracing all those private spheres in which human existence had hitherto detached itself from the State and allowed itself a certain degree of neutrality. . . . There are to be no more private Germans; each is to attain significance only by his service to the State."²

In other words, the Totalitarian State embodies something greater than mere individual life. It is the embodiment of a mystical divine purpose and demands the sacrifice of individual interests to serve it.

Nothing expresses this mystical conception of the State better than the following words of Mussolini: "Fascism is a religious conception, in which man is regarded in his immanent relation with a superior law, with an objective Will which transcends the particular individual and raises him to be a member conscious of a spiritual society. Whoever sees considerations of mere expediency in the religious policy of the Fascist régime has not understood that Fascism beyond being a system of government is also and above all a system of thought."

Such is the totalitarian theory of the State. We must ask what lies behind all this pretentious verbiage.

A State, we have seen, exists to protect the interests of a ruling class. The Totalitarian State is no exception to this. It is the autocratic form of the capitalist State which replaces the democratic institutions hitherto tolerated within capitalism. The State as "absolute", as expressing the "objective Will", is so much verbiage to screen the autocratic rule of the capitalist class. Mussolini, for example,

¹ Mussolini, *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*.

² Frederick Sieberg, prefatory letter, *Germany, My Country*.

leaves no doubt as to whose the "objective will" is. It is *his* will, reflecting the interests of the capitalist class. Thus he declared, in his Grand Report on Fascism on September 14th, 1929, "My words, as always in the last twenty years of political battles . . . come after the facts, which do not draw their origin from assemblies, nor from previous councils or inspirations of individual groups or circles; *they are decisions which I alone mature, of which, as is proper, no one can have previous knowledge.* . . ."

Most of the important portfolios in the Italian Government are held by Mussolini. He is the Prime Minister, President of the Grand Council of Fascism, and presides over the Council of Corporations. He also sees to it that the slogan "Mussolini is always right" is drummed into every school-child's mind.

Similarly, Hitler has declared that he alone decides the policy of Germany.¹ He is, we have seen, the "longed-for and inspired leader", infallible in politics.

The conclusion is inescapable. The Totalitarian State is, in the words, of Wickham Steed, "a modern Mussolinian and Hitlerite version of Louis IV's famous dictum: *l'État c'est moi—I am the State*".

But why is it necessary to camouflage this enormous power possessed by the Fascist leaders with references to the "absolute State", the "objective Will", etc.? In reality, we have seen, the Fascist leaders are fulfilling the requirements of a decaying capitalism. Their ruthlessness towards the progressive sections of society is a necessity for capitalism. But no man could perform this reactionary rôle without some protective rationalisation which disguised its ignoble character. The Fascist leaders need a theoretical mask for their autocratic rule on behalf of a decaying capitalism. They need an intellectual justification for the brutality which they display towards the progressive sections of society. This is the purpose of the totalitarian theory of the State. For it enables the responsibility for their actions to be thrust upon an inscrutable

¹ *Berliner Börsen Zeitung*, Nov. 1933.

divine purpose which they are serving. They are the instruments of the absolute Will, whose importance transcends mere individual life.

In a previous chapter we discussed the fact that these men had unconsciously identified themselves with God. We can now see the totalitarian theory of the State as a conscious expression of this identification. By its means such trifles as the torture and murder of opponents can be undertaken without qualms. To the unconscious these things appear as the exercise of divine powers; to the conscious they evidence the transcendental importance of the State over human life.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FLIGHT FROM REASON

WE HAVE SEEN that a capitalist class which has lost objective justification for its existence and which constitutes a barrier to social development, can only maintain itself by using extremely reactionary and psychologically perverted elements against the revolutionary working masses.

Social reality demands a revolutionary change and all those members of society who are in touch with reality, who do not fear it but can see the promise of further progress which it holds, press eagerly onwards. Their criticisms of capitalist society spring from an examination of existing reality; for science is their best advocate. On the other hand, the defenders of capitalism are fighting against the demands of reality. They dare not recognise the potentialities involved in the present degree of control which science has given man. That would be fatal for capitalism. But neither dare they recognise that in striving to preserve an outworn social system they are betraying a deep fear of reality. For that would be fatal for their psychological stability. What they do instead is to deny the efficacy of science to comprehend reality. They claim that there are other methods, more penetrating, more revealing, giving a fuller and deeper understanding of reality than does the intellectualism of science. In other words, they advance the claims of mysticism and intuition in opposition to those of science. In place of "reason", "faith" is exalted.

The following is a typical outburst by a Nazi "theorist" against culture and science: "Intellectualism is inimical to all that is living. For it does not proceed from the living truth itself, but from a thought that has been conceived about truth. It is the devilish child of humanism,

enlightenment, liberalism. Where it goes it kills all living seeds; it brings destruction and annihilation to all that is the product of growth, of tradition, all that is based on the higher and greater. Spiritual values fall before it and nothing remains but desolate reason with its empty clichés.

"In science it expresses itself as objectivity, in art as over-specialisation, in politics as Bolshevism, and in religion as a reasoned recognition of God, in contradistinction to a humble faith in God. . . Kill it and pull it out with all its roots, so that the German soul may live."¹

"When I hear the word culture," exclaimed the Nazi poet, Hans Johst, "I undo the safety catch of my revolver."

The above portrays the intense fear of science and the application of reason to the problems of capitalism which dominates the minds of those who furnish the last support for capitalism. For they fear that an objective consideration of capitalist society would inevitably condemn it as unfit. Hence, for their own mental comfort they must not only refuse to give capitalism this objective consideration. They must also seek for some justification of this refusal. They must disguise the fact that their condemnation of science is a manifestation of their regression to an infantile level of psychology to which, in their flight from reality considerations, they have retreated.

We saw that this need to disguise the underlying unconscious motives was responsible for the "theoretical" justifications of boundless aggression as shown in the view of both Hitler and Mussolini that war is an ennobling activity. So the intellectual pervert, when confronted with the insolubility of problems within capitalist conditions of life, renounces reason and glorifies the irrational, the intuitional and the mystical. He does not consciously recognise that he is using this glorification of the irrational as a refuge from the problems of reality. He does not know, in other words, that he is "rationalising" his fear of reality by this glorification of the irrational. For, despite

¹ Ernst Krieck, Quoted by Alice Hamilton, "An Enquiry into the Nazi Mind," *New York Times*, Aug. 16th, 1933.

his contemptuous denial of the efficacy of reason to comprehend the world, he does not feel mentally comfortable until he has adopted "reasons" which justify his rejection of reason. This is an example of the subjective rationalisation referred to in the preceding chapter. Thus we saw that reasoning on an objective plane, or objective rationalisation, is the character of scientific enquiry. The purpose of such reasoning is to master the problems of reality. It indicates a willingness to face reality boldly. But when there is a fear of reality and an impulse to retreat from it, this process of rationalising no longer is applied to the world for the purpose of overcoming problems. The problems are denied existence by the simple process of so distorting the mental reflex of reality that the problems disappear. They are, that is to say, wished out of existence. Hence, by declaring the world inaccessible to reason, all those problems which appear to an objective consideration of reality are denied real existence. The fear of applying reason to the problems of capitalist society is thus rationalised by the simple process of denying the efficacy of reason at all. This latter process has also been described as wishful thinking. The individual indulging in this wishful thinking does not want to see the reality of a situation. He, accordingly, distorts reality as presented to his mind, until it fits in with his desires. In the case stated above, reality is given an irrational appearance because the individual wishes to think that the problems of reality are insoluble by the use of science and reason.

Perhaps the greatest example of this form of intellectual perversion is afforded by the theories of Oswald Spengler. His main efforts were devoted to showing that Western European civilisation was doomed to follow the path of all preceding cultures and civilisations by virtue of an inescapable logic of history. History constantly, relentlessly, repeats a cycle of birth, youth, age and death which never departs from the beaten track. To understand history we must understand it as it really is, "tragic, permeated by

destiny, and in consequence, meaningless, aimless and immoral in the eyes of the worshippers of utility. History reeks nothing of human logic."

Spengler distinguishes between a civilisation and a culture. "The civilisation is the inevitable *destiny* of the culture.

Civilisations are the most external and artificial states of which a developed humanity is capable. They are a conclusion, the thing become succeeding the thing becoming, death following life, rigidity following expansion, intellectual age and the stone built, petrifying world following mother-earth and the spiritual childhood of Doric and Gothic. They are an end, irrevocable, yet by inward necessity reached again and again."¹ Hence a civilisation is the culminating point of a culture. A Culture becomes a civilisation at the point where its doom becomes imminent. The nature of this distinction becomes clearer when we consider that Spengler equates civilisation with technical developments; the rise of democracy; and the spread of ideas resulting from these technical developments and democratic forms, expressing hopes of future progress and happiness. Thus Spengler scornfully depicts the outlook of such a period of civilisation. "A picture of the future in which the ultimate object and the final permanent condition of humanity is an Earthly paradise conceived in terms of the technical vogue, say of the eighties of last century. . . . No more war; no more distinctions of law, peoples, States, or religions; no criminals or adventurers; no conflicts arising out of superiorities or unlikenesses, no more hate or vengeance, but just unending comfort." Such prospects make Spengler "shudder"; they are "imbecilities", "trivial optimism", "appalling boredom" which can only lead to wholesale murder and suicide. Civilisation means that people have ceased to live close to the soil; the luxury-living city mob has replaced the "true type people, born of and grown on the soil". It follows that the enemy is the machine. It has created an "artificial world which is permeating and

¹ *Decline of the West*, p. 31, Vol. I.

poisoning the natural. The civilisation itself has become a machine that does, or tries to do, everything in mechanical fashion".

In a cultural period, however, man retains his primitive "soul". He is still able to exult in the joy of the kill. He is not yet dominated by the machine, by futile hopes of progress and happiness. He knows "the intoxication of feeling when the knife pierces the hostile body, and the smell of blood and the sense of amazement strike together upon the exultant soul. Every real 'man' even in the cities of Late periods in the Cultures, feels in himself from time to time the sleeping fires of this primitive soul. Nothing here of the pitiful estimation of things as 'useful' or labour-saving, and less still of the toothless feeling of sympathy and reconciliation".¹

Spengler sets out his theory of historical cycles with a wealth of analogy drawn from preceding civilisations. He reviews the Sumerian, Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Chinese, Classical, Arabian and Magian civilisations. They all, he maintains, had their own mode of self-expression, which renders them incomprehensible to men of other civilisations. In a similar way the art and life of our Western civilisation will be meaningless to the men of future civilisations. Thus Spengler says, "One day the last portrait of Rembrandt, and the last bar of Mozart will have ceased to be—although possibly a coloured canvas and a sheet of notes will remain—because the last eye and the last ear accessible to their message will have gone."

Such in brief is the view of Spengler. It is a glorification of the primitive savageness of mankind, the sadistic impulses which lurk deep in all of us and which, in individual cases, has obtained an ascendancy. For Spengler's imposing historical theory, with its elaborate analogies from previous civilisations, is little more than a remarkable testimony to the powers of rationalisation by which unconscious, sadistic impulses may gain expression. But most important

¹ *Man and Technics*, p. 43.

of all is the fact that these sadistic outbursts closely reflect the mind of a doomed capitalism. For the evident decline of modern capitalist civilisation is depicted as the doom of *all* society. Capitalism cannot tolerate the thought that beyond it is something better for mankind. Instead, with the writing on the wall before its eyes, doomed and hopeless, it refuses to quit the historical stage. It strives to destroy all mankind in its last bitter struggles. Maddened by the vision of its inevitable destruction, it proclaims that its end will likewise be the end of all.

Inevitably, such a viewpoint cannot tolerate the hopes and aspirations which are taking root in the masses. No term is too strong for Spengler when he is confronted with the fact that the masses refuse to accept, without struggling, the historical doom which, he proclaims, looms before them. They refuse to go downhill, "with seeing eyes", uncomplainingly. Instead they have the impudence to organise, to demonstrate, to riot, to protest. To Spengler they accordingly appear as "human vermin", without the nobility to face their fate, even to welcome it, gladly. In tones of contempt he describes them, "One has only to glance at the figures in meetings, public houses, processions and riots; one way or another they are all abortions, men who instead of having healthy instincts in their bodies, have heads full of disputatiousness and revenge for their wasted lives and mouths as their most important organ. It is the dregs of the great cities, the genuine mob, the underworld in every sense, which everywhere constitutes the opposition to the great and noble world and unite in their hatred of it. . . ." ¹

Spengler's historical theory has some very interesting psychological features. But before we consider them, let us establish, first of all, that his theories must be understood in relation to his inner subjective life rather than the processes in the external world. In other words, let us see his theories as rationalisations of unconscious impulses before we enquire as to what those impulses are.

¹ *Hour of Decision*, p. 93.

Spengler proclaims the existence of other sources of knowledge than science. This, as we have seen, is the chief symptom involved in a flight from reality. It enables the construction of theories about the world which fit in with subjective predilections rather than the facts of the objective world. "These basic determinations of meaning," we are told, "are largely incommunicable by specification, definition or proof and in their deeper import must be reached by feeling, experience and intuition." He also discovers some other relation between phenomena than cause and effect. Cause and effect is the "logic of space", the logic of the real world, in other words. But Spengler requires another logic to establish his incommunicable determinations. This is "an organic necessity in life, that of Destiny—the *logic of time*". This is so, Spengler assures us, because it "is a fact of the deepest inward certainty". Everything accordingly points to Spengler's own inner mind out of which he has produced, liked a conjurer, his theories. And indeed Spengler as much as confesses this. For he tells us that "truth" is what the thinker "discovers within himself". "It is himself over again; his being expressed in words, the meaning of his personality formed into a doctrine which so far as concerns his life is unalterable, because truth and life are identical." But what right has Spengler to drag from his inner mind theories which the rest of the world are to hold as true?¹ Here we can see the operation of that God complex which impels Hitler and Mussolini to declare themselves the saviours of their nations. For Spengler too has no doubt concerning his own greatness. He proclaims that "I see further than others. . . I write for the future. . . ." "In this book is attempted for the first time. . . ."

Does not the above conform well with our observations on subjective rationalisations? We can understand

¹ It may be objected that Spengler means that his theories are "true" for him only. But the fact that he has written large books of many thousands of words about these "incommunicable" matters, shows that he believes that the "truth" fished up from the murky depths of his own mind is also "truth" for his readers.

Spengler's theories as distortions of reality produced to satisfy unconscious impulses. For the truth of these theories are to be sought, not in the external world, but in the personality of the thinker within whom they were discovered. They are not, on Spengler's own confession, guides to what actually takes place in the world, so much as doctrinal expressions of his own personality. Or, as we should express it, they are rationalisations of his own unconscious wishes. We can now examine his theory of history, with the knowledge that it is basically a rationalisation of unconscious impulses rather than an objective description of an historic process.

In the first place, his theory of the eternal march of cultures through civilisations to doom is an evident perversion of the Hegelian dialectic, the result of grafting onto it the Nietzschean doctrine of eternal recurrence. Development, according to the dialectic, takes a spiral, rather than a circular form. For it returns to an original starting point on a higher plane, so that there is a progressive spiral movement, mounting higher and higher. Marx and Engels gave the dialectic of Hegel a materialistic content. They applied it to society and discovered the progressive, dialectical nature of social development. Thus the original condition of common property gave way to private property in the course of social development. But the private property basis of society has now become a hindrance to the further development of society. A reversion becomes necessary to common property. But, whereas in primitive times common property in the means of production was determined by the *poverty* of society, by the fact that the means of living were too elementary and therefore too valuable to become the private property of any individual, the future basis of common property will be different. For it is no longer a matter of too few means of production which have to be carefully husbanded by the whole of society. Now, it is a matter of vast means of production which have become too vast for private hands. Hence the reversion to common property will take

place¹ on the basis of extremely well-developed means of production, whereas primitive common ownership was determined by precisely the opposite condition, namely, extreme poverty due to extreme scarcity of the means of production.

But such a theory of social development is to declare the possibilities of progress beyond the capitalist system. It is therefore unsuitable to express the gloomy forebodings of Spengler. It has to be modified to fit in with his refusal to face the future prospects of humanity. This has been done by borrowing Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence. History, with the aid of this doctrine, is pictured as an unending series of self-contained cultures, with their own distinctive features, but one and all following a destined path. This process has been described by Nietzsche as a "circular movement which has already repeated itself an infinite number of times, and which plays its game for all eternity".

Is there any psychological cause for this belief in a doctrine of eternal recurrence? We shall attempt to show that Spengler's adoption of this theory is closely connected with that exaggerated sense of self-importance which is an aspect of the identification with God. Nor was it an accident that Nietzsche also had an exaggerated conviction of his own importance. In his book, *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche tells the reader why he is so clever, why he did "a host of things of the highest rank". In his case, the conviction developed to the point of openly claiming to be God. For in 1889, Nietzsche went mad and the complete identification with the Father which forms the psychological basis of the identification with God overwhelmed every conscious rational consideration. Hence there seems to be a connection between this illusion of greatness and the belief in an eternal recurrence of things. In the first place, both can be shown to be closely related to infantile mental processes. We have already discussed the fact that the feeling that one is God derives from an infantile picture

¹ It has already taken place in the Soviet Union.

of the omnipotence of the father with which an identification is made. In the case of the doctrine of eternal recurrence we can see this as an intellectualised, or rationalised, version of a primitive psychological mechanism, called by Freud, "repetition-compulsion".

In a previous chapter we touched upon the division which Freud makes in the instincts. One group of instincts he calls the "death instincts". In connection with these instincts Freud called attention to a peculiar characteristic, the above-mentioned repetition-compulsion. By this Freud indicated the tendency of the death instincts to strive for the reinstatement of a previous state of affairs, the inanimate condition to be reached in death. As opposed to the life instincts which strive towards development, to the growth of the organism, the death instincts are retrogressive. The repetition-compulsion impels the seeking of old goals, the re-enacting of the past. It is essentially a primitive characteristic and its marked operation is a symptom of a regression to an infantile psychology. Thus children, it is well known, constantly repeat a series of actions in play without seeming to tire, and are often very trying to the adult patience with their demand for the same story, over and over again. Neurotics, who have regressed to an infantile psychological level, have constantly recurring dreams, in which they relive some situation relevant to their symptoms. For example, sufferers from a shock go through this experience again and again in their dreams in a form which retains much of its original vividness. In a more rationalised form we can see this impulse to return to a previous state, in the idealisation of the past, which plays so prominent a part in Fascist ideology. For what else is the glorification of ancient Rome by Mussolini, or the yearning of Hitler for the Aryan man, but an expression of this repetition-compulsion? The feelings of greatness of Hitler and Mussolini derive, we saw, from their identifications with their infantile conceptions of the father. The might of the father belongs to the past. The God-complex is an expression of an overwhelming desire to be like their

father, to be as powerful as he was. In desiring a return to past historical glories they are, at the same time, expressing their desire to identify themselves with the past power of their father. Hence the repetition-compulsion is, for them, inextricably associated with their identification, through their infantile conception of the father with God. In the same way, Spengler's historical theories bear all the indications of the repetition-compulsion. Thus he looks back to the glorious past and extols the primitive man who, he says, roosted "solitary as a vulture . . . without any communal feeling, with no 'we' like a herd of mere generic specimens . . . strong solitary man".¹ Here we see that his identification with the infantile conception of the father, coupled with a longing for the past, is characteristic of the repetition-compulsion. In this way, his God-complex and his theory of repetitionary cycles appear to have common psychological roots. It must be remembered that we have been guided by Spengler's own confession that his theories are himself over again, have emerged, so to speak, from the remote depths of his own mind. This, our discussion of the repetition-compulsion only confirms.

The form of rationalisation adopted by Spengler also strikingly reflects the mind and spirit of capitalism, faced with its doom. In other words, Spengler has woven a theory of history which shows a remarkable coincidence between his own individual psychology and the mind of a doomed capitalism.

Hating modern civilisation because he loves the past, he exults fiercely in its approaching destruction. His words reflect the defiant snarl of a doomed social class. Pointing out the destiny of that class, he urges it to fight to the bitter end, "to hold on to the lost position, without hope". Our civilisation will one day "lie in fragments, *forgotten* . . . our railways and steamships as dead as the Roman roads and the Chinese wall, our giant cities and skyscrapers in ruins like old Memphis and Babylon. . . . Faced as we are with this destiny, there is only one world outlook that is

¹ *Man and Technics.*

worthy of us, that which has already been mentioned as the Choice of Achilles—better a short life full of deeds and glory, than a long life without content. . . . Time does not suffer itself to be halted; there is no question of prudent retreat or wise renunciation. Only dreamers believe that there is a way out.

“We are born into this time and must bravely follow the path to the destined end. There is no other way. . . . The honourable end is the one thing that can *not* be taken from a man”.¹

Spengler is naturally very popular among Fascists. He gives the illusion of possessing a philosophy with which to oppose the Marxist outlook with its emphasis on the inevitability of social progress, through the destruction of capitalism. The Fascists, because their sole purpose is to defend a decaying capitalism, must make war on every progressive idea. For the logical realisation of such an idea is only possible through the destruction of capitalism. As enemies of social progress they need an intellectual justification which will enable them to do their work of destroying every prospect of progress with equanimity. They need a world outlook, a philosophy which will make the ideas of progress seem weak and pusillanimous, and which will extol the gloom which surrounds a dying capitalism. The pathologic mind of Spengler has produced such a philosophy. It has produced a historical theory which “explains” the inability of the Fascists to solve any of the problems of capitalism. Civilisation is doomed, and unemployment, poverty, etc., are merely the by-products of the downward curve of civilisation. To think that there is a way out is to give way to “cowardly optimism”. We must go to our doom with seeing eyes, without hope. Such are the comfortable thoughts with which the Fascist legislators can console themselves when faced with their own inability to solve the major economic problems of to-day. Similarly, the belief that the final stage of civilisation is marked by “Caesarism”, the seizure of power by

¹ *Man and Technics.*

powerful individuals or minorities, seems to justify the ruthlessness of Fascist dictatorships. In the light of this theory the Caesars have come, they are the Hitlers and the Mussolinis, the fore-ordained men of might, the last gallant stand of a doomed civilisation. And well do they fit the description which Spengler gives of them. "These uncomprehended and hated leaders . . . have not lost the old triumph-feeling of the beast of prey as it holds the quivering victim in its claws. . . ."

The Fascists find in Spengler just that glorification of sadism which gives a doctrinal dignity to their mad lusts. Man is "a beast of prey". History is "war history". To kill, to hate, to become intoxicated with bloodlust, to plunge knives into hostile bodies, to exult with amazement at the smell of blood; such are the noble qualities of the "genuine human soul". Spenglerism, the distorted world-view of a mad genius, is a fitting, cultural expression of Fascism, the creed of perverts and degenerates.

It is true that the brutal outspokenness of Spengler sometimes makes it necessary for Fascists to dissociate themselves with a point here and there. For, after all, it would be difficult to raise the false hopes in the populace upon which Fascist demagogy depends, if the doom of civilisation was openly proclaimed. Spengler is not for the masses but for the "cultured" few. They have no illusions as to the rôle of Fascism; they know quite well the worth of the promises it makes. And for this very reason they need some intellectual crutch upon which to lean. The high esteem in which Spengler is held in Nazi circles is evidenced in the popularity of his books. Many thousands have been sold in Germany and he has many openly-avowed followers in the higher circles of the Nazi Party. His popularity has spread to this country, so that we can read such eulogies as the following in Fascist publications:

"Spengler's interpretation of world history is a colossal monument to the European mind. . . . His interpretation of past history remains valid, and constitutes a base from

which modern man may begin to interpret his own present and to modify his own future."¹

More striking still, the *Fascist Week*, in a Spenglerian mood, proclaimed:

"Fully aware of the decline of cultures and civilisations before us, we still demand the right of every proud warrior—to fight for a cause though that cause seem lost."

In contrast to this morbid gloom, this dread of the Socialist morrow, we may set the stirring words of a Communist writer:

"Against all this pessimism, decline, decay and filth, tragic destinies, self-heroicings, idolisation of death, returns to the primitive, mysticism, spiritualism and corruption, the revolutionary proletarian movement of Communism, of Marxism, the heir to the future, proclaims its unshakable certainty and confidence in life, in science, in the power of science, in the possibility of happiness, proclaims its unconquerable optimism for the whole future of humanity, and in this sign, armed with the weapons of scientific understanding, of dialectical materialism, of Marxism, will conquer and sweep from the earth the dregs of disease and decay which find their expression in Fascism."²

These two contrasting views sum up admirably the difference between Marxism and Fascism, the one outlook based upon science and a well-grounded optimism, the other reflecting the doom and pessimism of a dying social order.

¹ J. Drennan, *B.U.F.*, pp. 176-7.

² R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 231.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE RATIONALITY OF FREUD

IN THE PREVIOUS chapter we emphasised the fact that Fascist intellectuals and theorists seek to glorify the irrational, the intuitional and the mystical in opposition to the claims of science.

It is necessary in connection with this to deal with a serious objection which is often raised against Freudian theory. It is often said that psycho-analysis is likewise a glorification of the irrational, that Freud, because of his insistence on the important rôle of irrational factors, aids this reactionary flight from reason. This viewpoint has been expressed by an American writer, who discusses both Marxism and Psychology. "The problem of the Fascists is only too simple. By ignoring consciousness and appealing to unconsciousness . . . by tapping precisely those deep-dwelling automatisms of the human nervous system . . . the Fascists can play upon the primitive emotions of fear and vanity to the insanely triumphant undoing of mind and social awareness. . . . For what I am saying from a psycho-analytic point of view is that Fascism employs Freudian mechanisms and motivations in its campaign of anti-Marxism. . . . Surely it is permissible to ask whether there is in psycho-analysis something that mystics and reactionaries can make a vital use of for their obscurantist purposes. The answer is: 'Yes.'"¹

Here the view is expressed that the discovery of underlying unconscious motives to conscious behaviour has been a fruitful discovery for mystics and reactionaries. The Fascists employ "Freudian mechanisms" in their campaign against Marxism. (Schmalhausen, be it observed, does not deny that these "Freudian mechanisms" really

¹ Samuel D. Schmalhausen, *New Road to Progress*, p. 278.

exist, but he asserts that in revealing them Freud has placed very potent weapons in the hands of reactionaries.)

In the first place, Fascist demagogues, such as Hitler and Mussolini, are not students of psycho-analytic theory; they are merely what might be termed instinctively good psychologists. That is to say, they have shrewdly observed their fellow-creatures and drawn their own conclusions regarding the most effective means of influencing them. They have discovered that appeals to sentiments of national pride, the exciting of racial hatred, the play on fears, are more efficacious for their purposes than rational argument. Such discoveries do not need the genius of a Freud. They have been the stock-in-trade of every demagogue, were used extensively during the war, enabled men like Lloyd George to sweep the country with campaigns, and are in evidence at every general election. Would anyone suggest that the Conservatives, for example, consciously applied Freudian technique when they plastered Mr. Baldwin's benevolent features on the hoardings, with the caption "the man you can trust"? From the Freudian point of view this was an invitation to see in Mr. Baldwin the father who promised his love and protection. But the Conservative Central Office had not been reading Freud. For all that Freud's theories do is to explain why such propaganda is successful. And for this reason Freud, as a matter of fact, is anathema to the Fascist mind, a fact which has been acutely discerned by Mr. Leonard Woolf in his splendid exposure of political and intellectual charlatanry.

Why do Freud's theories arouse such a great loathing in the minds of the Nazis, he asks. He replies: "I suggest that the reason is that psycho-analysis explains too clearly for Nazi mental comfort from what submerged layers of the savage and primitive mind Herr Hitler's social and racial message and Nazi political practices really spring. Thanks to Dr. Freud, we now know many things—not all of them pleasant, but none the less true—about the human mind in Germany and the rest of the world."¹

¹ *Quack, Quack*, p. 85.

None the less there is no certainty that, in spite of the avowed hatred for Freud in Fascist countries, there is not some wise individual here and there, high up in the Fascist propaganda organisation, who has not consciously learned from Freud, and used what he has learned for the purposes of Fascist propaganda. Let us assume this unlikely possibility to be so. Does this mean that we ought to regard psycho-analysis as being a reactionary teaching, since it may possibly have been used by Fascist propagandists?

To begin with if these irrational, unconscious processes to which Freud calls attention do, in fact, exist, then, in revealing their nature, Freud has made a valuable contribution to science. It is not suggested, let us remember, by Schmalhausen that these unconscious processes do not exist, but that Freudian theory enables them to be used by Fascists for reactionary purposes. I submit that much the same could be said for Marxian theory. For Marx has revealed the nature of a social process, the knowledge of which might well be used for reactionary purposes. Marx has explained the nature of the class struggle. Just as Freud has not invented the unconscious, neither has Marx invented the class struggle. Both have revealed the nature of processes, whose effects were previously observable but not explicable in scientific terms. If the Fascists are using Freudian mechanisms in appealing to the unconscious, are they not also using Marxian mechanisms in prosecuting the class struggle in the most extreme manner possible? Is it inconceivable that the Fascists might learn from Marx how consciously to prosecute the class struggle on behalf of the ruling class? Is it not true to say that many Fascists have brought to the Fascist Party the experience and understanding which they gained in Marxist parties, that they have turned to reactionary advantage all they ever learned regarding the nature of capitalist society, the class struggle, the rôle of the State? What better example of this very possibility could one have than Mussolini.

Thus if Freud is reactionary, because Fascists may use his theories, so too is Marx. But this is of course absurd. It is to ignore the fact that every discovery of science is liable in a period of capitalist decay to be used for the perverted purpose of bolstering up capitalism. Should we denounce chemistry and physics because they are being used to destroy human lives and property in the form of explosives and poison gas? Should we revert to Luddism, and denounce the technical developments which have given rise, under capitalism, to more misery, unemployment and poverty? Yet to denounce the Freudian discoveries of the unconscious motivations of human behaviour, merely because they might be wrongly used, is no less foolish than to denounce chemical and technical discoveries. In fact it is more foolish. For while capitalism persists the chemical and technical weapons remain largely in the hands of the capitalist class and can hardly be used in our fight against capitalism. But the better knowledge of our fellow human creatures which psycho-analysis gives us, is a weapon which we can use, with effect, in our struggles. We cannot afford, in a superior fashion, to stand aside and leave the field clear for reactionaries to exploit man's unconscious life.

In seeking to direct the unconscious life along progressive channels we are, at the same time, giving it the highest possible rational expression. For the problem of the Socialist is basically one of getting people to act and think in a rational manner, a manner, that is to say, which takes cognisance of the realities of social life. But we can hardly hope to give this rational character to behaviour if we leave unanswered fundamental questions regarding the source of much of man's irrationality. If, on the other hand, we arm ourselves with a knowledge of the unconscious motivations of human behaviour we are better able to give these unconscious forces an objective, rational expression. It is, accordingly, absurd to close our eyes to the unconscious and irrational sources of behaviour on the grounds that Fascists make successful appeals to

them. This is all the more reason why we should understand wherein lies the strength of their appeals.

There is, however, another aspect of the matter dealt with in the already-mentioned book by Schmalhausen. The view is advanced that psycho-analysis concerns itself too much with the individual neurotic, the peculiarities of individual irrationality, to the exclusion of the socio-economic forces conditioning these factors. To cope with these neurotic and irrational characteristics within capitalist society is impossible. They are reflections of the fact that capitalism is an irrational social order, a social order in which the poverty and misery of life are not conducive to rational, well-balanced individuals. If we want to eliminate neuroticism we must first of all eliminate capitalism. "My Marxian thesis," says Schmalhausen, summing up this point of view, "is that *capitalism* is the major neurosis of our age . . . when a social order is deranged and insane, you can hardly expect the mind of the individual to be very sane; if the social factor is in disequilibrium, diseased, culturally pathological, the psychic factor cannot possibly be sane and whole . . . only in a sane society can you cultivate and perpetuate sane minds."¹

Now, I believe that most Marxists and a goodly number of analysts would concur heartily with the above statement. It states in a striking manner what has been insisted upon in this book namely, that the difficulties, the perplexities, the problems, which capitalism holds for the mass of the people, destroy the sane, adult, rational attitude and lead to regression to psychological infantilism; to a flight into the neurosis of Fascism, in the most extreme cases.

This obviously implies that we should strive to institute a sane, social system in which mental life can function, without the terrible dreads and fears of capitalism. But it is not sufficient to recognise the necessity for such a sane, well-balanced social system. We must not, in picturing the *future* possibilities of confident, rational, adult-minded

¹ *New Road to Progress*, p. 291.

individuals which will develop within this society, forget this all-important fact. We must not forget that to obtain this society we must work with the human material upon which capitalism has already wreaked its neurotic will. It is not suggested that we attempt, by individual treatment of millions of individuals, to induce them to think as rational, and well-balanced members of society. To psycho-analyse whole populations is an absurd and fantastic proposition. But, nevertheless, until we have removed capitalism we have only the more or less irrational, emotional, neurotic, regressive people *bequeathed to us by the rottenness of capitalism*, with which to accomplish the removal of capitalism. In other words, our propaganda, our efforts, must be made effective, not among highly rational adults, accustomed to dispassionate and objective consideration of the pros and cons of political theories. Our efforts must gain effect among individuals whose behaviour is to a great extent determined by irrational and infantile considerations.

They are individuals who are readily stampeded into wars by delusionary dangers, who can be whipped up into an insane fanaticism of patriotic fervour to the point of exposing themselves and their wives and children to indescribable horrors in the interests of their rulers. They do these things, let us calmly recognise, not in response to an adult, rational evaluation of their own economic and social interests. They do them because they are impelled largely by unconscious, irrational, uncritical and infantile forces. Hence, if Marxists wish to change the social system with the aid of these people they must add to their economic knowledge of capitalist development a knowledge of the psychological effects produced by capitalist conditions of life. For Marxists have the tremendous task of giving the unconscious, irrational impulses of the masses a rational, conscious direction, if these impulses are to be used for progressive ends. The Marxists, in other words, must become the conscious, controlling guides of the masses. But they can hardly

give that conscious control and guidance if they are completely ignorant of the impulses which require their guidance.

This has been our point of view throughout this book. In accordance with it we have examined the psychology of nationalism, demagoguery, etc., as they relate specifically to Fascist reaction. But what relates to Fascism also relates, to some extent, to all capitalist countries. They all suffer to a greater or lesser degree from the economic and social evils which engender the psychological characteristics of Fascism. Hence, to return to the viewpoint of Schmalhausen, we cannot rest on his emphasis of the socio-economic factors responsible for neurosis and regression under capitalism. We accept the necessity of this emphasis, but go further. It is also necessary to enquire into the general, mass characteristics of the psychological reactions provoked by these socio-economic factors. We must ask ourselves what psychological factors have been so affected by capitalist conditions as to give rise to these irrationalities of human behaviour. Schmalhausen, rather reluctantly, has to concede this. After a section entitled "What Marx can teach Freud", in which Freud's undoubted political ignorance is made the occasion to discredit Freud's psychological theories (a process not altogether free from illogic), he appends a footnote to the effect that in a more elaborate discussion "one important section will have to be captioned: What Freud can teach Marxians".¹

"We need light," he cries, "more light on the psychological factors in the contemporary situation that makes Fascism, with its slogans of back to barbarism, more insidiously persuasive to millions of victimised human beings than Communism with its shibboleth of forward to civilisation. How account for this ideological regression?"² How, indeed! That is one of the things that Freud can teach Marxians.

So much for a justification of the rationality of Freudian theory. If we are to understand the strength of Fascist

¹ *New Road to Progress*, p. 303.

² *ibid*, p. 281.

appeals a knowledge of Freudian theory is indispensable. But not only does Freudian theory give us an insight into the psychological strength of Fascist propaganda; not only does it reveal the unconscious sources of the striving for power which characterises Fascist leaders; not only does it explain why capitalist economic decline breeds cultural decadence. Psycho-analysis throws light on a phenomenon intimately connected with the Marxist parties themselves. This is a tendency which, psychologically related to Fascism, can find shelter in the ranks of the Marxists. To a consideration of this phenomenon we now turn.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TROTSKYISM

SO FAR WE have studied the irrational impulses in the millions of people who give their support to Fascism. We have also studied the psychology of the individuals who place themselves at the head of Fascist parties, and who, impelled by infantile motives of self-display and aggression, serve, with their tortures and vainglorious proclamations, the needs of a decaying capitalism. It would, however, be a serious mistake to assume that these psychological characteristics were restricted only to the followers of Fascism and to the Fascist leaders. The Marxist outlook is essentially rational and objective. It corresponds, in other words, to the facts of the real world. But this is not to say that all those who adopt the Marxist outlook are automatically freed from irrationalities and unconscious, infantile compulsions. The Marxist outlook can equally with any other outlook be adopted by an individual seeking an intellectual justification for his inner compulsions. The fact that it corresponds with reality only makes it more difficult to detect the unconscious impulses which it masks. Undoubtedly such unconscious impulses enter into the composition of every Marxist, though they are, in the main, well sublimated. That is to say, the theory and practice of Marxism, the organisation and participation in the tasks of social reconstruction, give a conscious and outward expression to unconscious impulses, of a socially useful and highly rational character. In that sense, Marxism enables the rational control and direction of our unconscious life. Reality considerations are dominant. This fact strengthens the conscious ego, whose task it is, according to psycho-analysis, to guide the unconscious in accordance with the requirements of reality. Hence Marxism, because of its concern for reality

conditions, provides the most rational expression which can be given to the unconscious impulses.

But there are cases where Marxism is adopted not in response to the demands of reality. It is possible for Marxism, eminently rational though it is, to be adopted because it serves the same subjective purposes as Fascism. It is possible, in other words, for a strongly sadistic or exhibitionistic individual to find scope for his sadism or exhibitionism within the Marxist party. And further it is possible that the objective needs of the revolutionary movement may coincide, for a fairly long time, with the subjective needs of such an individual.

Let us consider how a revolution may give scope to the sadistic and exhibitionistic impulses of certain individuals. The Russian Revolution, for example, undoubtedly provided, in its general hostility to Czardom and capitalism, its unleashing of hate and anger, its need for inspiring revolutionary leaders, an opportunity for sadists and exhibitionists of every kind to find ample scope within the revolutionary movement for their inner compulsions. The objective needs of the revolution coincided magnificently with their subjective desires. Talented exhibitionists like Trotsky and Zinoviev delivered flaming orations, became inspiring figures, and in the fulfilment of their exhibitionistic impulses also fulfilled an objective revolutionary need. But with the passing of the phase of civil war, with the stabilising of the structure of the newly erected Socialist society, other tasks became necessary. It became necessary for the energies of the revolutionary leadership to be devoted to the more prosaic tasks involved in the economic reconstruction of the country. The excitement and glory of civil war had passed. The civil war was a phase that no sane Marxist wished to prolong. It was an unavoidable means to the establishment of Socialism, not an end in itself. But those Marxists (or, as Lenin used to call them, r-r-revolutionists) for whom the revolution was the opportunity to protest, to denounce, to pose as heroes, to indulge in terror for the

sake of terror, could only see in the painstaking, less romantic devotion to the task of constructing a Socialist society in Russia, the sacrifice of the world revolution. Psychologically, they were suited for the aggressive, destructive phase of the revolution. They naturally wanted to prolong this phase and to extend it. They wanted the "permanent revolution", to indulge in adventuristic incursions into other capitalist countries bearing the flaming torch of revolution. They were unable to see that precisely in the unremitting devotion to the task of building a Socialist society in Russia, would the torch of revolution flare into a beacon light for the rest of the world.

Moreover, because such individuals were not concerned with the objective needs of the revolution except in so far as they coincided with their own subjective desires, they attempted to use the prestige and influence which they had acquired to pervert the revolutionary movement, to hold it back from Socialist achievements. In other words, they passed from a revolutionary rôle to a reactionary one and revealed their subjective affinity to Fascism.

The suggestion that many of the leading figures of the Russian Revolution were akin to Fascist leaders in the subjective factors which impelled them, received striking confirmation in the revelations at the trials of the Trotskyists, in August 1936 and January 1937. A number of leading individuals, occupying important positions had been plotting to disorganise Soviet industry, to assassinate Stalin and his closest associates, and to utilise the resulting confusion to seize power.

For many people in this country, to whom the successes of Socialist construction in Russia are an inspiration, the opposition groups in the Soviet Union, such as the Trotskyists, were regarded as being composed of well-meaning Marxists, with a record of revolutionary struggle behind them, who, on certain theoretical grounds, parted company with the bulk of the party. (The oppositionists

thought, for example, that the official party was tending to pay more attention to the project of constructing Socialism in Russia than the needs of the world revolution.) In the minds of the average, sincere, British Socialist, the opposition leaders did not appear as treacherous, but rather as super-revolutionaries, impatient of the slowness of the world revolution. When, therefore, these men were charged with plotting to betray the revolution, working hand in glove with Fascist Germany and imperialist Japan and acting directly under the instructions of Trotsky, the charges were received in amazed incredulity. The first trial, which resulted in the death sentence for Zinoviev and Kamenev, gravely disturbed many progressive-minded individuals. There was talk of "frame-up" charges and confessions extorted by terror or the promise of a reprieve. This impression, however, was largely destroyed by the second trial. Here, for example, are the comments of an English barrister, Mr Dudley Collard, which is typical of the reaction of many sincere, progressive minds. It is clear that Mr. Collard had at first serious misgivings concerning the confessions.

In a report to the *Daily Herald*, he said, "I attended the opening sessions with many stories of Soviet 'frame-ups' in my mind, and as I watched the seventeen accused men file into the dock knowing that they were facing an almost certain sentence of death, I felt some sympathy for them.

"This was before I had heard the indictment. Now that I have listened to the four days' examination of the guilty men who have all pleaded guilty without reservation I can say that, without hesitation, I am convinced of their guilt.

"I have never heard such a tale of treachery, murders, spying, terror, sabotage, as the prisoners have told with complete callousness and effrontery.

"In my opinion there could be no question of a 'faked' trial. . . . No set of men could act their parts so brilliantly

nor sustain their acting in this way without a slip for four long days.

"They are clearly in full possession of their faculties, do not appear to be terrorised, and look well—there is nothing to prevent any of them from alleging that the charges are 'framed'."¹

Although, however, it was clear that the serious charges levelled against the Trotskyists were justified, there still existed, for many people, a cause for bewilderment. This bewilderment found an expression, for example, in an article by Mr. A. J. Cummings in the *News Chronicle*. He asserted that any doubts that he had had concerning the validity of the confessions of the Trotskyists had been dispelled by the second Moscow trial. He listed, however, a number of questions, which he termed "incomprehensibles", which arose from the activities of the Trotskyists. It was incomprehensible that such men as Kamenev and Zinoviev, Radek and Piatakov, men equipped with a remarkable knowledge of Marxist theory, who took part in the Russian Revolution in leading rôles, now that the Socialist system was consolidating itself, should treacherously betray it.

And indeed these things would be incomprehensible if men's motives were wholly rational, were uninfluenced by unconscious impulses. None of these men could have suddenly become defective in Marxist theory and lost sight of objective considerations which the newest recruit to the Communist Party could see. If, however, we consider the behaviour of these men at their trials, it becomes clear that they were responding to subjective impulses rather than objective considerations. We see that they did not behave as men who had valid, objective grounds for their viewpoints. For the Communist who believes that history is with him, who really has valid objective grounds for his viewpoint, invariably manifests a certain bearing during trial by his enemies. Ernst Henri has eloquently described this bearing as follows: "Men are different

¹ Dudley Collard, *Daily Herald*, Jan. 28th, 1937.

because they represent different classes and different historical movements. They who keep pace with the advance of history, who represent its progressive, forward-leading force, and are themselves carried on by it, they do not fear death; the dynamic and therefore the ethic of history is superior in them to their personal destiny; and in the moment of death at the hands of the enemy they see, like Kant, the starry heavens above them and the moral law within them. They who are in the pay of the desperate, because decaying, forces of the past themselves carry in them the germ of death; their life is decline and fear."¹

In our more modest terms, we should say that true Marxists have achieved a sublimation of their unconscious impulses which enables them to think in terms of social necessity; which gives them courage in the face of all that is decadent and rotten in contemporary society.

The authors of the Berlin Diaries, from which we have already quoted, generals in the highest circles of the German ruling class, also noted this difference. Commenting on the sentence of death passed on some Brownshirts who had killed some workers, the Diaries read, "They made a wretched show before the judge—cowardly and pitiable. Communists would have comported themselves differently from these Brown swaggerers."

Now compare the defiant and courageous bearing of Dimitrov in the face of his Fascist torturers with the confessions of the accused Trotskyists. *If* Trotskyism is a just criticism of the Stalin régime, then Trotskyism is necessary to save the revolution from collapse and betrayal. If this really is the objective justification for Trotskyism, a heroic determination to save the Russian revolution, why then did the Trotskyists, at their trial, cover themselves with recriminations, blame one another, and implicate their fellow plotters? Even the unlikely possibility that these men were subjected to physical and mental torture cannot explain why, if their confessions were forced from them, they did not take the opportunity

¹ Ernst Henri, *Hitler over Russia*, p. 62.

in open court, before the world correspondents, of retracting them boldly.¹ Not only did they not do this. They openly in the court implicated other members of their own organisations, when, if Trotskyism has any objective justification, it should have been imperative to assure that those unknown should remain unknown and carry on the "good" work. There was surely something pathological in the perfect readiness of the accused Trotskyists to endanger the lives of their fellow plotters.

It is clear that their actions at the trial were not consistent with the view that they were heroic revolutionaries fighting to preserve, against tremendous odds, the gains of the revolution. This is important. For the idea still lingers that these men were misguided enthusiasts differing on theoretical grounds from the official party. If they had what appeared to them to be real, objective grounds for their differences with the party, their one main desire, when faced with their own deaths, would have been to keep alive at all costs the opposition party. The first principle of revolutionary theory is that without a party a movement is headless. Their implications of others, and the consequent weakening of the opposition party, is sufficient evidence that their motives lacked objective justification. They did not, that is to say, believe in the objective validity of their own movement. For a revolutionary who is sure of the objective rightness of his party goes to his death with sealed lips.

¹ This question was asked Trotsky by Mr. Kingsley Martin of the *New Statesman and Nation* who interviewed him in Mexico. Trotsky replied that the world newspaper correspondents were all "paid prostitutes" of Moscow. He insinuated that D. N. Pritt, the noted K.C., had been bribed to write his account of the Kamenev-Zinoviev trial. "This," says Kingsley Martin, "was more than I could bear. I explained to him that I knew Mr. Pritt well, that he might perhaps have been deceived, might even be accused of credulity when he went to Russia, but that his integrity was beyond question. . . . To see him get up and shout abuse at Mr. Pritt was revealing. . . . I came away from our talk less inclined to scout the possibility of Trotsky's complicity than I had been before, because his judgment appeared to me so unstable, and therefore the possibility of his embarking on a crazy plot more credible."—*New Statesman and Nation*, April 10th, 1937.

The fact, however, that these men have been considered as hardened revolutionaries, who would never have succumbed to the tortures of the Czarist police, adds to the incomprehensibility of their confessions. It is not a sufficient explanation to point out that these men had in the past opposed Lenin on many points. This does not explain their confessions but only the recrudescence of their opposition. Nor is it sufficient to point to the cowardice which Zinoviev and Kamenev manifested when the question of insurrection in 1917 was raised. For the other Trotskyists were not of a similar craven disposition. Nor are attempts to explain their behaviour in terms of some peculiar Russian masochistic psychology, as manifested by some of the characters of Dostoevsky and Turgenyev, very plausible. The energy which the Russian people are displaying in the fulfilment of their five year plans disposes of this fable of a peculiarly passive Russian temperament.

The real explanation is, I believe, as follows. These were unstable, unhappy, neurotic types who, by some inner compulsion, were able to find in the glorious work of launching the revolution an inner satisfaction. We cannot say, of course, precisely what were the psychological factors which found this satisfaction. Human psychology is too complex to be reduced to formulae. But we know that the phase of the struggle for Socialism, beginning with the long period of underground preparation and culminating in the civil war, gave unusual scope for aggressive impulses. Likewise the excitement and glamour of the actual phase of civil war gave scope for infantile impulses of self-display. But as soon as the phase of actual civil war was over, they were driven by the same unconscious aggression to destroy the revolution they had helped to make. By any canon of formal logic this indeed is incomprehensible. The tragedy is that it was probably incomprehensible most of all to the victims of these unconscious impulses. They must have continually asked themselves, when faced with death, "Why did we do it?"

At their trial they covered themselves with reproaches, called upon their children to follow Stalin loyally, expressed the deepest remorse and shame that their names which could have shone brightly in the annals of the revolution should have been so besmirched. Such was the glimpse which they offered the world of the inner misery of mind which they must have been suffering.

The facts of the Moscow trials must impel every sympathiser of Trotskyism, every Trotskyist, to ask himself an important question. Why was it so easy for the accused Trotskyists to repudiate the theories of Trotskyism? The answer is that Trotskyist theories were a necessary intellectual mask to hide the personal ambitions of the Trotskyists. But when these ambitions had been fully exposed in the court, the mask was no longer needed. It therefore was discarded without ceremony.

This is a fact which those who have become enamoured of the glamour of Trotsky's personality must seriously weigh. It is far from my intentions to suggest that every admirer of Trotsky is consumed with personal ambition; but in associating himself with Trotskyism he is unconsciously helping forward a malicious campaign against the Soviet Union and the International Communist Movement. This campaign is the expression of the bitterness of personal ambition thwarted on the part of Trotsky and other one-time leading revolutionary figures. This bitterness drives them to devote their energies to malicious criticisms of the revolutionary movement. Facts are distorted to aid in this process. The successes of the Soviet Union, just because they have been achieved under the leadership of Stalin, are belittled. In this way Trotskyism helps the Fascist purpose of breaking down that bond of sympathy which links the workers of the whole world with the achievements of the first Socialist State.

In the world struggle for Socialism the existence of Socialist Russia is a factor of prime importance. It is proof of the fact that Socialism is not some Utopian dream,

some economic hereafter, but a living possibility, within grasp of the workers of every land. The existence of Socialist Russia is the biggest thorn in the side of world capitalism, the surest augury of the eventual triumph of Socialism all over the world. Whoever, therefore, derides the achievements of Socialist Russia, and throws doubt on the possibilities of even greater achievements, is performing valuable service for the world capitalist class. Trotskyism does this although its criticisms are cunningly presented as evidence of genuine concern for the welfare of the Soviet Union.

The best proof of the malicious character of these criticisms of the Soviet leadership is contained in the various pronouncements of Trotsky himself. Throughout these pronouncements one can detect the desire to belittle the achievements of Socialist construction, to throw doubt on the possibilities of future construction, and, above all, an invidious determination to despoil the existing Communist leadership of any credit. For Trotsky grudgingly has to admit some achievements; but they have always been accomplished in spite of the "epigone leadership". Let us first of all consider the document issued as the platform of the opposition in 1927 and later published under the title of *The Real Situation in Russia*. The Stalinists were accused of introducing "capitalism on the instalment plan". In other words, the Stalinists were intent, underhandedly and inconspicuously, on reviving capitalism and destroying the proletarian State. The Stalinist road, declared Trotsky, was away from Socialism back to capitalism. He also accused the dominant circles of the party of planning to annul the monopoly of foreign trade, the most potent weapon in the hands of the proletarian State. Looking ahead somewhat Trotsky made the gloomy prognostication that by the end of 1931 the number of unemployed would have grown to no less than three million men and women. Thus in 1927 Trotsky was fearful that the party was leaving Socialism, was making plans to introduce capitalism, bit by bit, and that its

industrial policy could only result in an enormous number of unemployed by the end of 1931.

These gloomy prophecies of Trotsky were never fulfilled. Indeed, Trotsky unwittingly confesses to their falsity in a subsequent pamphlet. This is the *Draft Thesis of the International Left Opposition*, as it is grandiloquently called, published in New York in 1931. We learn from it that the "nationalisation of land, of the means of industrial production and exchange, with the monopoly of foreign trade in the hands of the State, constitute the bases of the social order in the U.S.S.R." Further, "Through the combined effect of economic success and administrative measures, the specific gravity of the capitalist elements in economy has been greatly reduced in recent years, especially in industry and trade. The collectivisation and the dekulakization have strongly diminished the exploitive rôle of the rural upper strata in the given period. *The relationship of forces between the Socialist and the capitalist elements of economy has undoubtedly been shifted to the benefit of the former*"

In other words, Trotsky, reviewing the Russian situation some four years after the issue of his platform in 1927, has to admit that his gloomy prognostications have not been fulfilled. Capitalism has not been introduced "on the instalment plan". On the contrary, "the relationship of forces" has shifted in favour of Socialism. Nor has foreign trade left the hands of the State. Nor has unemployment reached the figure of three millions. Indeed, by 1931 it had been abolished. Thus, instead of suffering the disastrous fate which Trotsky foresaw, the Soviet Union, under the Stalin leadership, had achieved gigantic successes. Surely Trotsky, confronted with the non-fulfilment of his predictions, must feel that he has erred a little in his estimations of the Soviet leaders.

Not at all. Trotsky does not yield so easily. These wonderful achievements took place *in spite of* the Stalinist leadership. This leadership neither planned nor expected them. They made "a way for themselves". Trotsky, blinded with hate and confronted with the unpalatable facts that

his predictions have not been fulfilled, uses even the achievements of the Soviet Union as a vehicle for his spleen. Thus he says, "The possibility of the present truly gigantic successes of Soviet economy. . . . The unprecedented high tempos of industrialisation . . . have made a way for themselves in spite of the expectations and plans of the epigone leadership. . . ." ¹ The implication is clear. The "epigone" leadership neither desired nor planned these gigantic results. They "made a way for themselves". They just happened. That is the picture he paints of the leadership under which these achievements were gained. An aimless, hopeless, drifting leadership, taking no thought for the future. But stay. How can we reconcile this picture with the well-known plans for extending industrial development, the high hopes and plans of which all the world is aware? Surely these hardly point to a leadership bereft of plan and expectation. But Trotsky is equal to this. Only the *present* achievements happened in spite of the expectations, etc., of the leadership. But when speaking of future achievements it is impossible to deny the hopes of the Soviet leaders. He must, therefore, somehow present these plans and expectations as even deadlier sins than having no plans or expectations. (Then, presumably, when the achievements have been gained it will once again be in spite of the expectations and plans of the leadership.)

Not for nothing did Lenin once describe Trotsky as "the poor hero of the phrase". With a stroke of his pen, a cleverly turned phrase, and the justified optimism and steadfast assurance of the Soviet leaders in the continued growth of Soviet industry are converted into a heinous crime. "Absolutely false," thunders Trotsky, "is the official doctrine of fatalistic (!) optimism prevailing to-day, according to which the continued speedy growth of industrialisation and collectivisation is assured in advance and leads automatically (!) to the construction of Socialism in a single country."¹

¹ *Draft Thesis of the International Left Opposition.*

This quotation from Trotsky is an excellent example of what Dr. Thouless, an eminent psychologist, calls emotionally-toned words. An excerpt from his excellent little book, *Straight and Crooked Thinking*, will make my meaning clear: "There is a well-known saying that the word 'firm' can be declined as follows: I am *firm*, thou art *obstinate*, he is *pigheaded*. 'Firm' 'obstinate' and 'pigheaded' all have the same objective meaning—that is, following one's own course of action and refusing to be influenced by other people's opinion. They have, however, different emotional meanings; firm has an emotional meaning of approval, obstinacy of mild disapproval, and pigheadedness of strong disapproval.¹

In a similar way, Trotsky expresses his strong disapproval of the optimism of the Soviet leaders by deriding it as "fatalistic". That this optimism is justified by the existing achievements and contradicts his previous assertions that the Soviet leaders are without plans and expectations, does not weigh with Trotsky. His one concern is to despoil the existing leadership of any credit. This is even more clear in his remarks concerning the policies of industrialisation and collectivisation of the Soviet leaders. In one place, he charges the Soviet leaders with having rejected a "*bold* policy of industrialisation and collectivisation". But of course where it is unavoidably necessary to recognise that a policy of industrialisation has been successfully carried out, then there it is not by a *bold* policy. On the contrary, it is by a policy of "adventuristic economic tempos" under the "administrative whip". To use a popular phrase, Trotsky wishes to have it both ways. Where he finds it necessary for his argument to accuse the Soviet leaders of rejecting a policy, it is of course, a "bold" policy which they reject. When, on the other hand, he grudgingly has to admit the successes of Soviet economy, then they have been achieved, not by a *bold* policy, but by methods of "administrative dizziness", by adventuristic economic tempos.

¹ p. 13.

But, the reader may ask, perhaps the Russian workers *were* goaded by the "administrative lash", *were* driven recklessly on by the Soviet leaders, and therefore the much vaunted economic achievements *have* been produced, unwillingly and resentfully? This is the impression Trotsky wishes to create, in the thesis of the International Left Opposition which we are discussing. We turn, however, to another of his books, written a year later, in 1932. In it Trotsky admits that the gigantic work involved in these triumphs has resulted in a glow of self-confidence in the workers, which one would hardly expect in workers working under an administrative lash. But even this is turned to good account by Trotsky against the Stalinists. Thus he says: "The proletariat has grown numerically and culturally. Having accomplished the gigantic labour of restoring and uplifting the national economy, the workers are now experiencing the restoration and up-lift of their self-confidence. This growing, inward confidence is beginning to change into dissatisfaction with the bureaucratic régime."¹

Why a "growing inward confidence" should change into dissatisfaction with the régime which has produced it, Trotsky does not deign to say.

The question of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. is one upon which Trotsky reveals the most astounding inconsistencies. He will speak of "the might of the Socialist method of economy" which has triumphed in the Soviet Union over capitalism. He will do this because it would be clumsy to deny the obvious, particularly as he wishes to win the support of the masses of the Soviet Union who can have no illusions on the score. But he will deny that Russia has entered Socialism.² It is this denial that Russia has or can

¹ L. Trotsky, *What Next*, p. 134.

² It may be objected that when Trotsky uses the term "Socialist economy" he implies only that there is a *tendency* in the direction of Socialism in contrast to the Stalinists who talk of Socialism as already achieved. Trotsky means a completely classless society, wherein the State has disappeared and distribution of wealth is based upon individual needs. Whereas in Russia a classless society has not been fully established,

enter Socialism alone which constitutes the theoretical mask which Trotsky adopts to hide his bitter enmity of Stalin and his lack of confidence in the possibility of Socialism. The theory of permanent revolution is a denial that Russia can stand alone, without revolutions in the major European countries. "It would be hopeless," says Trotsky, "in the light of the experience of history and the

the proletarian State still exists, and distribution is according to work done. This, according to Trotsky, is only a transitional phase from capitalism to Socialism. This argument of Trotsky's, however, conceals a particularly despicable piece of political dishonesty. For he knows full well that Lenin distinguished between Socialism and Communism in such a way that what Trotsky now calls a transitional phase corresponds with Lenin's definition of Socialism. Thus Lenin writes: "And so, in the first phase of Communist society (generally called Socialism) 'bourgeois right' is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic transformation so far attained. . . . 'He who does not work shall not eat'—this Socialist principle is *already* realised. However, this is not yet Communism, and this does not abolish 'bourgeois right' which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an equal (in reality unequal) amount of work, an equal quantity of products. . . . But the State has not altogether withered away, since there still remains the protection of 'bourgeois right' which sanctifies actual inequality. For the complete extinction of the State, complete Communism is necessary. . . . But the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism is clear. What is generally called Socialism was termed by Marx the 'first' or lower phase of Communist Society." (*The State and Revolution*.)

This is the sense in which the Stalinists claim to have established Socialism. Trotsky, however, by slurring over this distinction between Socialism and Communism is able to attack the claims of a Stalinist. The dishonesty of this method lies first of all in the fact that Trotsky calls himself a Leninist although he knows full well that his definition of Socialism differs from that of Lenin. Having claimed to be a Leninist, Trotsky can use his own definition of Socialism to "prove" that the Stalinists are disloyal to Leninist theory. With people who are not familiar with the distinction between Socialism and Communism made by Lenin this method has a certain amount of success. Thus one of Trotsky's warmest admirers, Max Eastman, writes for an American public: "Stalin's ideologists have invented the scheme of making Socialism mean a 'first-stage' in the development of Communism, thus elaborating the smoke-screen and making it possible to put over in the name of Socialism policies of reaction that would horrify the most conservative antagonists of Lenin." (*Harper's Magazine*, Feb. 1937.)

In this way, by suggesting that Stalin has "invented Socialism" as a stage in Communism, the Trotskyist Eastman is then able to characterise the slogan, "To each according to his work" as reactionary.

light of theoretical considerations, to think, for example, that a revolutionary Russia could hold its own in the face of conservative Europe. . . .” Naturally, as each year finds the Soviet Union still standing defiantly in the face of capitalist Europe, and more firmly based than ever, “the experience of history”, if not Trotsky’s “theoretical considerations” prove him wrong. No genuine advance in the construction of Socialist economy can take place, said Trotsky, until after the victory of the working class in the most important countries of Europe. Unflurried by Trotsky’s shrill protests, and sustained by a deep confidence in the possibilities of Socialism, the leaders of the Soviet Union have undertaken the tremendous task involved in the industrialisation of Russia and the development of Socialist economy. They have set about solving the difficulties themselves, rather than waiting for the rest of the world to come to their rescue. As a result, tremendous strides in Socialist economy have been made, “gigantic successes” as Trotsky put it, though apparently in spite of *his* expectations. At a time when the difficulties of industrialisation seemed tremendous and insurmountable, Trotsky quoted, with approval, Lenin’s statement of the conditions governing the establishment of Socialism in Russia. “We can consider the victory of Socialism over capitalism, and its permanence guaranteed,” said Lenin, “only when the proletarian State power, having conclusively suppressed the resistance of the exploiters and assured itself of their complete solidity, reorganises the whole industry on the basis of large-scale collective production and the newest technique (based on electrification of the entire economy). . . .” This, of course, was some time ago when the success of the Soviet régime, even its continued existence, was still highly problematical. Then, Trotsky could agree with a definition of Socialism which seemed beyond reach. But now that Socialism as defined above draws nearer, now that “truly gigantic successes” have been achieved, what has Trotsky to say? Unwillingly he is compelled to admit the possibility of constructing

Socialism in Russia—but only “academically”. Thus: “Academically it is understood one can construct within the boundaries of the U.S.S.R. an enclosed and internally balanced Socialist economy.” Following this begrudging recognition comes a terrifying picture of the difficulties ahead. “But the long historic road to this ‘national’ ideal would lead through gigantic economic shifts, social convulsions and crises. The mere (!) doubling of the present crop . . . the huge (!) task of realizing an agricultural surplus of tens of millions of tons . . . the no less acute problem of growing rural over-population (one recalls Trotsky’s gloomy prediction of 3,000,000 unemployed by the end of 1931, when in fact unemployment was abolished by that date) . . . the radical redistribution of the gigantic human mass among the various branches of economy and the complete liquidation of the contradictions between the city and the village, etc. etc.”

What reply can one give to this jeremiad? The reply was given by Lenin some time ago when he referred to the camp followers of the capitalists who, having been overthrown, refused to believe it, and strove to regain their “lost paradise”.

“And these capitalist exploiters will necessarily be followed by a wide stream of the petty bourgeoisie, as to whom decades of historical experience of all countries bear witness that they are constantly oscillating and hesitating, to-day following the proletariat and to-morrow taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution, succumbing with panic after the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, giving way to ‘nerves’, whining, running hither and thither, deserting from one camp to another. . .”¹

In such a manner does Trotsky serve the cause of counter-revolution. For the mainstay of the revolution is the leading party in the Soviet Union, and Trotsky’s venomous attacks on this party can only be of service to those who desire the downfall of the Soviet régime. This Trotsky well knows. He states that the reason why the workers do not

¹ *Proletarian Revolution*.

overthrow the "bureaucracy" is that they fear that this would "clear the field for the class enemy". And so the workers (the same who have been experiencing an "uplift" in their self-confidence) "with clenched teeth bear (tolerate) the bureaucracy".¹ But this does not deter Trotsky from advocating the forcible overthrow of the Soviet leaders. To those people who have been shocked by the suggestions that Trotsky was planning the violent removal of Soviet leaders, the following words should prove instructive. "After the experiences of the last few years," declares Trotsky, "it would be childish to suppose that the Stalinist bureaucracy can be removed by means of a party of Soviet congress. . . . The bureaucracy can be compelled to yield power into the hands of the proletarian vanguard [i.e., 'Trotskyists'] *only by force.*"² With characteristic sardonic humour, Trotsky informs his readers that this would not involve a revolution, but merely a form of police action to remove undesirables. He did not, of course, mention that the police action might come from the German Gestapo.

The lesson of Trotskyism is this. Within the revolutionary movement a temporary home can be found for the most dangerous types, individuals who would not hesitate to destroy the movement the moment it ceased to serve their personal, unconscious ends. The fact that they are themselves completely unconscious of the impulses driving them, renders them all the more dangerous. They are impelled to disguise the real underlying motives of their actions from themselves and others. And they do so by a display of Marxist erudition and energetic work for the movement during the time that the interests of the movement coincide with their subjective desires. And because they are so strongly impelled, because the revolutionary movement has become for them an important source of gratification for their unconscious impulses, they often become talented, efficient and unsparing in their energies.

¹ *Soviet Union and the Fourth International*, 1934.

² *ibid.*, p. 16. (My italics.)

They are sustained by strong unconscious drives of narcissistic character. That is to say, they are impelled by infantile feelings of self love manifesting themselves in a desire for prominence, personal ambition, etc.

And since leading positions in the revolutionary party almost inevitably fall to those who can show oratorical, theoretical and organising ability, they devote themselves to these spheres. In this way, they find their place in the leading ranks of the revolutionary party. Can it be said that this is an exaggeration? What are the lessons of the fate of Kamenev, Zinoviev, etc.? Were not these brilliant Marxists, and did not their brilliance win for them leading positions in the Bolshevik party? A very serious question arises from such considerations. How can we protect ourselves from such people? As Hitlers and Mussolinis we know them for what they are, but within our own ranks we are, to a large extent, at their mercy. For so long they fulfil the external obligations of a devoted revolutionary, so long as they say the things required of them in speeches, organise this or that strike or demonstration, and fulfil generally the routine life of a revolutionary, we have little means of safeguard against the harm they may do. Yet they do immense harm to the movement long before they begin actually to plot against it. They may do immense harm by brutal, unsympathetic criticisms of other Socialist and Labour leaders; the unnecessary antagonising of people with democratic-pacifistic beliefs; the urging of strikes for the sake of striking; the overbearing and unapproachable attitude towards lesser members of their party; the monopolising of discussion at conferences, etc., the formation of cliques—all these are minor symptoms easily explained away as revolutionary zeal.

We have all come into contact with avowed revolutionaries who seem completely devoid of genuine feeling for their fellow-creatures, who repel because they seem wrapped up in their own purposes, who have only harsh and unkind criticisms for all who differ from them.

These were the types which Stalin clearly had in mind in his recent speech to the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. "The fact is that some of our Party leaders suffer from the absence of attention to people, to Party members, to workers. Furthermore, they do not study the Party members, do not know what is close to their hearts and how they are growing. . . Such leaders try in general to think in tens of thousand, not to worry about 'units', about individual Party members. . . ."

These leaders, continued Stalin, "are people who in essence are profoundly anti-party". The harm they do he described as follows: "As a result of such a heartless attitude towards people, towards Party members and Party workers, discontent and bitterness are artificially created in a section of the Party, while the Trotskyist double-dealers adroitly seize hold of such embittered comrades and skilfully drag them after themselves into the morass of Trotskyist wrecking."¹

We can recognise these sadistic types in the Fascist Party readily enough, but when they happen to use the revolutionary movement as the cover for their activities, they are only discernible with difficulty.

Trotskyism plus terror, said Zinoviev in his confession, equals Fascism. In other words, beneath the attitude of the avowed and potential Trotskyist is the subjective attitude of the Fascist. For this reason a knowledge of the psychology of Fascist leaders is, at the same time, a knowledge of the psychology of the Trotskyists. And without a doubt there are concealed within all revolutionary movements individuals who are still unavowed Trotskyists, who mask with their Socialist ideology the psychology of the Fascist.

On the other hand, the predominant leaders of the Communist movement appear to possess that rational, objective outlook which is proof against subjective bias. In my opinion, Stalin and the other prominent Russian leaders possess stability of temperament to a remarkable

¹ *Daily Worker* report, April 8th, 1937.

degree. One has only to reflect on the patience and leniency which they showed towards their one-time colleagues who had developed counter-revolutionary tendencies, the number of times they accepted them back to the fold when they had admitted their errors. One can contrast this patience with the mad-dog methods which Hitler used to dispose of his colleagues, in order to see the difference between the Communist and the reactionary.

The rôle of leader is a delicate one, open to many abuses. If, for example, the leadership of the C. P. S. U. had entered the hands of Trotsky and his friends, the Soviet Union would long ago have been destroyed in a hopeless offensive against world capitalism. It is not enough to be thankful that the reins of leadership did not fall into the hands of Trotsky. We must assure ourselves in advance that dangers of this kind do not occur in our own movement. In averting this danger psychological science can play an important part. Not only does it teach us something about the human beings with whom we must rebuild society. It can teach us how we can find men capable of the task of leading those human beings to freedom.

CHAPTER XX

CONCLUSION

LET US NOW seek to draw the threads of our enquiry together. Our discussion has been designed to draw attention to the serious fact that men's unconscious emotional impulses, stimulated by the deprivations of capitalist conditions, can be exploited by the Fascists for reactionary purposes. In particular, men's national sentiments, based upon a deep-lying love for their mothers, symbolised by the country of their birth, and on aggression towards those who appear to menace the national welfare, are converted, by Fascist propaganda, into means of buttressing the capitalist system.

But these national sentiments may also be enlisted for social reconstruction. Socialists can appeal to love for country with the conviction that, in doing so, they are striving to give this love a firm, objective basis. For the aim of the Socialist is to give the phrase "my country" an objective reality, by placing the country's land and other means of production in the hands of the people.

And here I wish to emphasise once again that the endeavour to understand men's emotional life is not a form of opportunism. By this I mean that no Socialist or Communist should feel that the "emotional appeal" is an exploitation of illusions. Men's anger and resentment against capitalist conditions are no less real because they may become allied to emotional impulses relating to earlier frustrations. They are strengthened and deepened thereby. But, and in this lies a great danger, these, in themselves rational, emotions may find an irrational, and therefore illusory, satisfaction in aggressive nationalism or anti-Semitism, instead of finding an eminently rational, and therefore non-illusory, satisfaction in social-reconstruction. Hence the problem is one of revealing to men

what are the real, objective modes of expression for unconscious impulses in order to prevent their exploitation by Fascist propagandists.

It is entirely incorrect to think that Socialists and Communists are competing with Fascists if they pay attention to unconscious, emotional impulses. This is not so. Socialists and Communists seek to give a rational, objective expression to very real and very important emotional impulses which otherwise would be perverted and distorted, squandered in illusory satisfactions, by the Fascists.

The belief that "emotional appeals" depend upon offering illusory satisfactions has been responsible for viewing such appeals with suspicion by Socialists and Communists. And undoubtedly the suggestion that such appeals should be made has often taken the form most likely to arouse these suspicions. For it is one thing to suggest that Socialists and Communists should make a sympathetic and scientific study of the emotional life of the people, and quite another to suggest that we should win the support of the people on any and every emotional issue, using whatever emotional bait happens to be handy in order to hook the people to our movement. This would mean, for example, that because anti-Semitism has been successfully used by Fascists to appeal to emotional, aggressive impulses, we, too, should advocate anti-Semitism. But this is a gross distortion of an appeal for a psychological approach on the part of Socialists and Communists.

Consider this passage:

"Only one theory will fit the facts, however unpalatable it may be to Liberals or Socialists or Pacifists—and that is despite the appalling barbarism of their actions, the crudity of their speeches and the nonsensical character of their 'myths', the Fascists have shown a better understanding of the immediate demands of present-day society than many of their more idealistic opponents. It is simple common sense to assert that if someone is regularly more successful in a certain environment, that he understands

the situation better, is better attuned and adapted to it than someone who is generally unsuccessful.”¹

But the “better understanding” of the Fascists manifested itself in the skilful use of anti-Semitic and aggressive nationalist propaganda as a means of diverting the anger of the workers from the capitalist class. The situation to which they “adapted” themselves was one in which a decaying capitalist régime needed the support of a political party of terrorists and demagogues to defend itself from the threat of revolution. What were the “immediate demands of present-day society” which they grasped so well? The capitalist class required a reactionary political force, and the workers and middle class required an outlet for their aggression. So the superiority of the Fascists consisted in their ability to satisfy the demands both of the capitalists and the masses! Conversely, the failure of other parties was due to their inability to meet these “immediate demands”.

Dr. Conze and Miss Wilkinson would, of course, be the last to suggest that the Socialist and Communist parties should have adapted or attuned themselves, as did the Fascists, to the situation, by dangling the bait of anti-Semitism, and by impressing the capitalists with their ability to defend the capitalist system. Yet the passage quoted might be used to support these tactics; for such were the methods by which the Fascists proved to be suited to the environment; such were the methods which gained them their temporary successes.

But, of course, a Socialist or Communist party cannot “adapt” itself in this manner. Its purpose is not to fit in with the environment of a decaying capitalism, but to change it. It cannot, therefore, even if it would, make use of the emotional baits of anti-Semitism, etc., which serve to divert the resentment of the workers from the capitalist system. In place of a bait held out to deflect aggression, it must point to the objective of social reconstruction; for this objective can alone give a rational expression to the aggression of the workers. It

¹ E. Conze and Ellen Wilkinson, *Why Fascism*, pp. 69-70.

must reveal, in other words, the identity of sentiments of love for one's country and hatred for its enemies, with the struggle to remove one's country's real and present oppressors, namely the capitalist class. This, then, is the profound difference between the illusory hopes and satisfactions held out by reactionary propaganda and the very real, rational and worthwhile satisfactions held out by Socialists and Communists.

Whether reaction or social progress triumphs in a country depends, however, largely upon the skill and understanding with which Socialists and Communists apply themselves to the task of winning the masses for the work of social reconstruction. If their efforts are so unpsychological that they arouse no answering response in the minds of the masses, then Fascism will reap the potential revolutionary harvest only to destroy it. If they are ignorant of the psychological factors which are entwined with the resentment and bitterness to which the deprivations of capitalism give rise, their propaganda will fail to have effect. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that if we seriously desire to awaken the masses to political action, we must seek to understand men's emotional life. We must recognise, for example, the existence of psychological factors involved in the need for leadership which has enabled Hitler and Mussolini to exploit the hopes of the German and Italian peoples. For if we are to lead the struggle for social reconstruction we cannot leave out of our calculation these psychological factors.

Once again, however, we must distinguish between the use of emotional factors made by Fascism, and the use which a rational, Socialist policy involves. For the Fascists, the leader is unanswerable to his followers or to his party. He demands unconditional and uncritical support. He enforces, in other words, an infantile attitude towards himself. In contrast to this, the Socialist or Communist leader has been appointed by his party, is subject to the criticism of his colleagues, and must loyally carry out decisions and policies of the party as a whole. These are

safeguards which help to ensure that the party leader takes an objective, rational viewpoint, when circumstances arise in which he must use his own discretion and act upon his own initiative. Moreover, as we saw in Chapter IX the Socialist and Communist leaders seek to encourage a self-reliant attitude in their rank and file so that they become less and less dependent upon him.

This question of leadership is of central importance. We have seen, in relation to the success of Fascism in Italy and Germany, how much this success was due to the defective leadership of the working class. At this moment, when the essential need in Britain is for unity among the workers and progressive elements of society, the question of leadership assumes extreme importance. For leadership and unity are indissolubly related. If the unity of the workers and the progressive sections of society is to be effective, it must develop a leadership which firmly cements that unity. For unity which has no leadership, which is, so to speak, anonymous, will fall apart at the first serious challenge. A movement must be bound together by ties of loyalty as well as of self-interest. *Loyalty to a leadership is the most concrete and psychologically effective method of assuring that loyalty.* A movement based upon a negative, defensive policy in which various organisations have come together upon a mutual basis of self-protection will be soon rent by inner divisions if it lacks some overriding loyalty. That is why the problem which confronts us is not merely one of unifying the progressive forces. It is one also of providing a leadership and a positive objective, without which unity will lack stability and cohesion. This is a problem which, as the need for unity increases, will assume ever more urgent form.

Further, if the Communist and Socialist movement desires to break down the isolation between itself and other working-class organisations, it must approach these organisations with psychological understanding. For the working-class movement is still suffering from the psychological blindness which, in the past, sometimes marred

the Left-wing parties. To-day, when overtures for unity are made to Labour and Social Democratic organisations and individuals, they are still received with suspicion. And for this the methods of approach used by the Left-wingers are in part responsible. Take, for example, the view that described the Social Democrats as "Social-Fascists", the moderate wing of Fascism. Now, in my opinion, this description was correct—but *objectively* only. Objectively the effect of Social Democracy has been to transmit the wishes and influence of the capitalist class to the masses, holding them back from Socialist activity. Social Democracy undoubtedly played the rôle in Germany of preparing the way for Fascism. But Social Democracy, *subjectively* considered, is another matter. The Social Democrat may have certain illusions regarding the possibility of a peaceful transition to Socialism, which illusions considerably aid the transition to Fascism. But, none the less, they have a different subjective content to the beliefs of the Fascists. For, to attain this peaceful transition to Socialism, the Social Democrat maintains the necessity for democratic institutions, a free Press, trade unions, etc., which is quite the converse of the Fascist outlook. In Germany, a full recognition of this subjective difference would have meant an earlier offer to unite on the basis of protecting just those things that the Social Democrat prizes so highly. And this in itself would have involved the latter in a revolutionary struggle. For to insist upon such things when they have become an embarrassment to capitalism is to transfer one's activities, consciously or unconsciously, from the paths of reformism to the revolutionary struggle.

The lesson has been partly learned. In England and other countries, with more or less success, overtures have been made for the preservation of existing democratic rights against the encroachments of Fascism. Certain Labour parties remain unconvinced by the protestations that the Communists and Socialists really want to defend democratic rights. For them, it is too sudden, too complete,

a reversal of policy. Yesterday the Communists were calling them Social Fascists; to-day they are making them an eager offer of unity. That this feeling is widespread in this country, at least, is indubitable. "Dialectical" explanations that the change in front is the result of a changed international situation, mask a fact that should be faced honestly. The changed international situation, the triumph of Fascism in Germany, is itself, in part, due to that split in the workers' ranks which the Communists now seek to repair. The Communist should openly admit that the use of the term "Social-Fascist", while objectively correct, was a wrong approach to his comrades in the Social-Democratic parties. A frank admission of this fact would overcome some of the misgivings that offers of united action are tactical moves, to be shelved when the next change in the international situation occurs.

Such a gesture would win confidence in the integrity of the Communist or Socialist. His facing of his own mistakes would act as a challenge to the Social Democrats similarly to face their own errors. And, to our cost, we know how incomparably more serious were the errors committed by the Social-Democratic leaders. In fact, when one considers the disastrous effect of that leadership in 1918 in Germany, the handing back of the power to the Generals; the fatuous belief that Hindenburg, Brüning, von Papen were lesser evils; the refusal to call a general strike when von Papen drove Severing from office; when one reflects on these things it is difficult not to feel that, in the German Communists' place, one would have taken the same attitude. None the less, it was psychologically obtuse to label the whole of German Social Democracy as Social-Fascism. It did not conform with the subjective content of Social Democracy, it ignored certain historical roots of Social Democracy and alienated thousands of honest, sincere, courageous and *loyal* Social Democrats.

Hence we see that the two main problems confronting the Socialist and Communist to-day, the problems of

leadership and unity, have important psychological aspects. They are interdependent, for a wise and courageous leadership can only encourage unity. If, then, Communists and Socialists are to justify their claim to lead the people to Socialism they must give serious study to these twin problems. They must see leadership, not only as an objective political necessity, but also as a psychological need for millions of people. They must accordingly see to it that they are not only equipped with an understanding of the political rôle of leadership. They must also have a knowledge of its psychological implications.

Psychology, then, is an essential study for Marxists. The world to-day is threatened by the growth of Fascist movements which, if undeterred, will drown contemporary civilisation in blood. But these movements are only dangerous because they have achieved an irrational hold on the minds of millions of people. Something of the nature of this hold this book has attempted to elucidate. It has been the contention throughout that we cannot regard the rule of Fascism in the countries in which it has triumphed as solely due to the violent and terroristic methods it uses against its opponents. For there are sections of the German and Italian peoples who believe blindly in Hitler and Mussolini. We have shown that it is not only by terror that Fascism maintains its grip, but also by means of a stranglehold on the minds of millions of people. For this reason it has been necessary to ask, and to attempt to answer, the question, "How has Fascism obtained its hold?"

Such has been the purpose of this book. If it arouses a recognition of the need for the study of the subjective life of man by those who wish to work for the cause of social reconstruction, it will have achieved its main objective.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

THE CLAIMS OF psychology to be regarded as a specific branch of scientific enquiry still meet with strenuous opposition. Indeed, among Marxists, psychology is suspect as a backdoor attempt to smuggle in idealism; an attempt, that is to say, to give man's mental life primary place in the determination of his economic and social existence.

The Marxists urge that mental life is basically a reflection of the external world; ideas refer to objects and processes in the external world. Hence this external, material world is primary; the world of ideas, its reflection, is secondary and derivative.

This undoubtedly is true. For if our senses did not provide us with more or less accurate pictures of the world around us, we would have been unable to effect the degree of control over our environment which we have effected. But it is not only necessary to have accurate impressions of the external world, in order to control and change it. These impressions must be converted into weapons for conquering the external world; they must, in other words, be dealt with *actively*. It is because man is endowed with the capacity to react actively to the ideas derived from the external world that he has achieved his conquests of nature. To say that ideas become actively opposed to the world whence they are derived is not to abandon the materialist viewpoint that ideas are the mental reflection of the external world. On the contrary, the recognition of a specific mental activity which uses, as its raw material, the ideas and impressions of the world, and the necessity to study this activity scientifically, is a means by which a whole vast realm may be rescued from idealism and mysticism.

This has already been pointed out by Marx. Criticising the one-sided view that ideas are passive reflections of environmental pressures, a view that neglects the active

rôle played by man himself in the production of his life history, Marx commented, "Thus it happened that the *active* side, in opposition to materialism, was developed by idealism—but only abstractly. . ."

The hint contained in these worlds has hardly been noticed by Marxists. It is a hint as to the direction in which materialism should be developed. Materialism, basing itself on scientific methods, must conquer the realms of subjective life, which hitherto had been left to the abstract mystifications of the idealist philosophers. For the real criticism of idealism is not that it concerns itself with mental activities. It is that it deals with these activities in an "abstract" fashion. It rejects a scientific approach to these activities and relies upon intuitional and metaphysical modes of enquiry. Mental activity is isolated from the world in which it works and made the object of inward speculation in a search for inner truths. To reject the methods of idealism is one thing. But to deny the existence of the mental activity about which idealism speculates is quite another matter. It is a philosophical emptying of the baby with the bath.

To a great extent, this has been unavoidable in the past. For then science was busy conquering the world of external nature and had little time to spare for a study of the inner world of subjective life. So long as the external world dominated man, so long, therefore, as it constituted a powerful menace to his existence, all the energies of science were necessarily absorbed in the conquests of the terrors of nature. There was no time to pause in this ceaseless struggle to enquire into the nature of the mental weapons with which man was fortunately endowed; science was too busy using these unique gifts to ponder overmuch concerning their nature. But while science was effecting these conquests of the external world at this necessary price of neglecting the study of the inner, psychological realm, there has never been lacking people who have claimed that the inner, psychological realm is all-important, and that the objective world of nature

illusory, or at best of secondary nature. And because of the unavoidable preoccupation of science with the struggle against the forces of nature, the idealists have been able to claim, as their own, the whole vast realm of man's psychological life. But now that science shows signs of turning to a study of mental life, the idealists vigorously denounce this new development of science as a violation of their rights. Science, they declare, can only fruitfully be used to study external nature; to attempt to apply it to the sacred realms of psychological life is to transgress against man's innermost convictions that there is a creative spontaneity in the realms of ideas which defies reduction to the deterministic formulae of science.

None the less, this interest in psychology is an important reflection of the type of problem which now confronts humanity. Man, Marx has observed, occupies himself with those problems whose solution are within reach. They are problems the solution of which are indispensable for the further development of society. To-day the extent of the conquest of his external environment has placed man in a unique position in the animal world. He alone has ceased to be at the mercy of nature. No longer does he have to take nature as he finds it; by means of science he can modify it, transform it to suit his purposes. He constructs dams to defeat the natural fury and ruggedness of rivers; defies the terrors of drought by irrigating the soil; clears mighty forests. No longer is he the puny and helpless plaything of natural forces but, on the contrary, has obtained a vast measure of mastery over nature.

The problems which he had to solve to accomplish this mastery of nature were of a technical character. In the process of solving these technical problems a vast economic and social environment has been thrown up, in which the efforts of men can be co-operatively applied to the task of wresting from nature the necessities of life. The result is that man has interposed between himself and nature a complex economic and social environment *of his own creation*. For it is because man reacts actively

to the external world that he has devised an economic and social environment as the most effective weapon with which to conduct his struggle with nature. And with the growing perfection of his economic and social environment his domination over nature becomes assured. It enables him to compel nature to disgorge a sufficient quantity of those necessities of life as to render negligible any fear of starvation or destruction. Science, in other words, has performed its work of subduing the natural terror which had threatened to overwhelm man. But having thus conquered the natural world and solved the problems involved therein, a new kind of problem, quite unlike those with which it has previously grappled, confronts science. It is the problem that the economic and social environment, *which is the product of man's active relation to nature*, somehow impedes the enjoyment of the triumph which science has obtained over nature.

In other words, the terrors of the natural world have been replaced by new terrors; for no longer does man fear natural scarcity but economic plenty. The economic crises have replaced, to a large extent, the natural disasters of famine, drought and flood, which were man's most formidable enemies. And as these new problems are the outcome of the active rôle which man plays in relation to nature, as they proceed, in short, from the economic and social environment which man has created in the process of struggle against nature, science cannot avoid asking whether this inability to take fullest advantage of the conquests of nature may not be due, in part, to aspects of man's own subjective activity which as yet he little understands. Thus the activity itself which has enabled the construction of the complex economic and social environment becomes the subject of puzzled enquiry of science.

To this it may be objected that science needs only occupy itself with an analysis of the economic and social factors whose existence are directly observable, for explanation of these new problems. Thus an economic analysis reveals that the obstacle in the road to social

progress is the private ownership of the means of production. The solution is to convert these means of production into social property. Further, a political analysis reveals the existence of parties, striving to safeguard economic interests. Socialist and Communist parties seek the interest of the working class, and capitalist parties defend the interests of the ruling class. To explain the existence of these parties, it is urged, there is no need to involve inner subjective impulses. The relationship between the political parties and the economic interests which they seek to defend is unmistakable, objective and logical.

This is true. The problems of the Socialists, however, begin with the perception that the bulk of the people do not behave in this logical way. Their economic and political analysis reveals how rational individuals ought to act, their daily experiences tell them that the logic of this fact has penetrated to the consciousness of but a comparatively few individuals. Nor is it sufficient to point to the vast propaganda machinery in the hands of the ruling class by which millions are persuaded to support policies contrary to their real, objective interests. The success of the propaganda is not only due to its extent. It is also due to the fact, as we have seen, that it appeals to irrational and infantile impulses. The problem before Socialists, then, is not one of understanding why people react *correctly* to the necessities of economic circumstances. Rather is it the problem of understanding why so many people *do not* so react. Political science can tell us what motives impel individuals and organisations to take certain steps, *only when those steps are in conformity with economic necessity*. When people do not act in conformity with economic necessity, the political scientist can only shrug his shoulders and say that they are blind to their real interests, that, in short, they are irrational.

But we cannot afford to dismiss this unfortunate fact with the term irrationality. This indeed is to concede everything to the idealists. For the idealists have always maintained that mental phenomena are not susceptible of

reduction to scientific law. What we must do is to seek for the causes of this "irrationality". That is the only rational way of treating the unpleasant fact of its existence. The science of the "irrational" is psychology. It attempts to get to the roots of the otherwise inexplicable and widespread irrationalities of everyday life. And as it is clear that there are causes of this irrationality which are not apparent to superficial examination, which require more than the label of "prejudice" or "stupidity" to describe their effects, the science which attempts to uncover these causes is of vital importance. Such a science is forced on us by the crying disparity between the necessities of social development and the small consciousness of these necessities. It is the science which most closely reflects the most pressing problems confronting humanity.

Psychology, then, is an indispensable study for all those who see the necessity for social change. Where it has not been entirely neglected by Marxists, there is the tendency to regard psychology as a department of physiology. It is denied that psychology as a special science can have its own existence. Mental activity must be studied in terms of physiological and neurological processes. This viewpoint was expressed in an authoritative work on "dialectical materialism" in the following words. Psychology, says the author, "is a sub-department of anatomy and physiology . . ." " . . . The empirical physiology of neural processes—the science of *conditioned reflexes*." "To talk of 'mind' as a 'quality' is to betray a quality of mind seldom met with outside Bedlam."¹ These definitions are all the more surprising when we reflect that they occur in a book on dialectical materialism. For dialectical materialism denies that the phenomena of one sphere of science can be wholly explained in the terms of another sphere. It denies, for example, that physiological processes can be completely expressed in terms of the chemical and physical changes which are involved. It maintains that with a growing complexity a qualitative change takes place. This

¹ T. A. Jackson, *Dialectics*, p. 39.

qualitative change involves something new, something irreducible to the conditions from which it evolved. It would appear to be an elementary consideration to regard mental activity as something qualitatively different from physiological activity, as something which has arisen from a complexity of physiological processes but which involves a new quality. It is just the possession of these psychological processes which distinguishes man from the rest of the animal kingdom, which has given him his ascendancy in that kingdom. Indeed, it may be said without exaggeration that it is just those qualities which are responsible for that specific form of the history of nature, namely human history. We may ask then how can we be expected to understand that which specifically distinguishes man, his psychological life, by a study of that which he possesses in common with the other animals, his physiological structure? For, considered physiologically, man is not far removed from the rest of the animal kingdom. It is only in the exercise of his vastly superior mental capacities that a qualitative difference appears. Thus Paul Radin, the distinguished American sociologist, asks what answer was man to give "to the perplexing problems that suddenly crowded upon him as he realised with ever-increasing poignancy that his motor reactions and his emotions were predominantly animal and only his thinking was human."¹

This refusal to accord to mental life a qualitative distinction from physiological processes is clearly due to the fear of making concessions to idealism. The author has not grasped the fact that it is precisely the task of dialectical materialism to wrest from idealism a realm which it occupies to-day almost unchallenged. Hence he refers to the one psychological theory which has done most to reclaim this psychological territory from idealism as "Freudian idealism". To this we shall return later.

We may note, however, a definition by another Marxist which correctly expresses the qualitative distinctiveness of

¹ *The Racial Myth*, p. 6.

mind. "Matter is primary. Consciousness is a new property, a new quality of a special form of matter." This, in a nutshell, contains the reason why a special science of psychology is needed.

It is necessary to consider, in more detail, the claim that psychology is "the science of conditioned reflexes". This viewpoint draws its main strength from the experiments of the late Professor Pavlov and his co-workers in Leningrad, *on dogs*. And because this is a viewpoint finding considerable support among Marxists, no attempt to discuss the psychological approach can afford to ignore it.

Briefly, Pavlov discovered that there were a number of reflex actions of which a dog was capable when appropriately stimulated, which were unlearned, or inborn in the dog. These he termed *unconditioned* reflexes. These unconditioned reflexes were only evoked by certain stimuli, but if other stimuli were applied a sufficient number of times, more or less simultaneously with the original stimuli, then the new stimuli would acquire the property of also eliciting the reflex. In other words, the reflex becomes "conditioned" to the new stimuli. Thus the flow of saliva normally evoked only by the sight and smell of food could be evoked by the ringing of a bell, or the beat of a metronome, or an electric shock, when these stimuli had been applied a sufficient number of times. They would, in other words, be capable of calling forth the reflex on their own.

The conditioning process is described by Pavlov in the following words:

"We come now to consider the precise conditions under which new conditioned reflexes or new connections of nervous paths are established. The fundamental requisite is that any external stimulus which is to become the signal in a conditioned reflex must overlap in point of time with the action of the unconditioned stimulus. In the experiment which I chose as my example the unconditioned stimulus was food. Now if the intake of food by the animal takes place simultaneously with the action of a neutral stimulus

which has hitherto in no way been connected with food, the neutral stimulus readily acquires the property of eliciting the same reaction in the animal as would food itself. This was the case with the dog employed in our experiment with the metronome. On several occasions this animal had been stimulated by the sound of the metronome and immediately presented with food, i.e. a stimulus which was neutral of itself had been superimposed upon the action of the inborn alimentary reflex. We observed that, after several repetitions of the combined stimulation, the sounds from the metronome had acquired the property of stimulating salivary secretion and of evoking the motor reactions characteristic of the alimentary reflex."¹

It has been possible by such means to condition animals to a wide variety of stimuli, to train them to respond in almost any desired manner to almost any kind of stimulus, so that the conclusion seems irrefutable that a large part of the animal's ordinary behaviour has been built up in a similar way. The likes and dislikes, the fear reactions, the so-called intelligent acts which are discernible in animals and which have been acquired during their lifetime, would seem to be a complex series of conditioned reflexes.

How do these discoveries apply to man? Professor Pavlov was very wary of making sweeping generalisations from his experiments on dogs to the effect that they supplied an answer to psychological problems. He says, "To sum up, we may legitimately claim the study of the formation and properties of conditioned reflexes as a special department of physiology. There is no reason for thinking of these events in any other way."² "In applying to man the results of investigation of the functions of the heart, digestive tract and other organs in the higher animals, allied as these animals are to the human in structure, great reserve must be exercised and the validity of comparisons must be verified at every step. Obviously

¹ I. P. Pavlov, *Conditioned Reflexes*, p. 26. (Oxford University Press).

² *ibid.*, p. 32.

even greater caution must be used in attempting similarly to apply our recently acquired knowledge concerning the higher nervous activity in the dog—the more so, since the *incomparably greater development of the cerebral cortex in man is pre-eminently that factor which has raised man to his dominant position in the animal world. It would be the height of presumption to regard these first steps in elucidating the physiology of the cortex as solving the intricate problems of the higher psychic activities in man, when in fact at the present stage of our work no detailed application of its results to man is yet permissible.*"

This warning, however, has not deterred some people from attempting to reduce the whole complexity of human psychology to an intricate pattern of conditioned reflexes. In particular, in America, has this attempt been made by a group of "psychologists", calling themselves "Behaviourists", under the leadership of Professor J. B. Watson.²

Let us consider the Behaviourist viewpoint, for it is the logical development of the physiological interpretation of mental events. Moreover, it claims to make a scientific approach to the phenomena of human behaviour, a claim which we cannot overlook if we are to justify the use of psychology.

¹ *ibid.*, p. 395. (My italics.)

² T. A. Jackson in *Dialectics*, says of the Behaviourist school that "it identifies mental and emotional phenomena so absolutely with physiological process that it *denies* the existence of any objective fact corresponding to the term 'mind'. All mental phenomena whatsoever are treated as simple, untransmuted reflexes. In fact Men, like Animals, are but 'conscious automata.' Thus the first school of 'modern' psychologists is so *modern that it has just caught up with Lamettrie.*"

The Behaviourists would of course strenuously deny that they regard all mental phenomena as "simple, untransmuted, reflexes." On the contrary, mental phenomena are considered as composed of very complex chains of conditioned reflexes of a primary, secondary, etc., order and of a verbal, visceral and kinaesthetic character. But, apart from this, there is an inconsistency in Jackson's attitude towards Behaviourism. For, he welcomes psychology as the 'science of conditioned reflexes' which is exactly what the Behaviourists are making of it. He also scoffs, as we have seen, at any suggestion that mind should be regarded as a quality, that is, as being something more than physiological processes. To think thus is "to betray a quality of mind seldom met with outside Bedlam." He thus stands foursquare with the Behaviourists.

Behaviourism asserts that psychology should concern itself with observable behaviour only; with, that is to say, what the organism *says* and *does*. The Behaviourist is not concerned with theories which have no direct and observable evidence. He is entirely objective, "his sole object is to gather facts about behaviour—verify his data—subject them both to logic and to mathematics".¹ From this we would expect that the theory of thought which the Behaviourist advances, would be one firmly based upon an objective foundation. "The Behaviourist," says Watson, "advances the view that what the psychologists have hitherto called thought is in short nothing but talking to ourselves." He then goes on to say, "The evidence for this view is admittedly largely theoretical" (!)² Now this indeed is a strange admission. For it means that despite the Behaviourist dictum that psychological theories should be based upon observable facts only, the Behaviourist theory of thought itself has no observable basis, the evidence for it "being largely theoretical". There is, of course, no reason why theoretical flights of thought should not go beyond the bare observable facts. Science would never have developed if human imagination had been unable to span the gaps in human knowledge with daring flashes of inspiration. The conclusive proof of a theory very often comes long after it has been propounded. No one would object to Professor Watson's theory of thought simply on the grounds that it is largely theoretical. But the admission that it is so, cuts the ground from beneath his own feet. For his main argument against the psychological theories which postulate conscious and unconscious processes in the mind is that *they* are largely theoretical, i.e. not based upon directly observable data. And indeed if science restricted itself to the study of that which was immediately observable only, there would be no possibility for science. For, as Marx once expressed it, if the appearance of a thing always coincided with its real inner nature, science would be unnecessary. The task of science

¹ J. B. Watson, *Behaviourism*, p. 6.

² *ibid.*, p. 238.

is to penetrate beyond the phenomenal form of things to their inner reality, to discover the laws of their existence, which their surface appearance may even seem to contradict. Thus the unknown world "in itself" becomes the known world "for us". For example, Marx, in probing the inner reality of capitalism, had to get beyond the surface indications which proclaimed capitalism as a system of freedom and opportunity for all, to the economic compulsions which rendered the apparent freedom of the masses of the people illusory. This was only possible by means of a process of abstraction, a process of mentally isolating the essential features of capitalism in order to deduce therefrom the essential nature of capitalism. All scientific theory is built in that manner and the fact that the concepts arrived at do not directly coincide with observable reality is no reason for rejecting them. For such rejection involves the rejection of the scientific method itself. We have to decide, therefore, in the case of psychological theory, not whether the conscious and unconscious processes postulated are directly observable, but whether they can truly be inferred from what can be observed of human behaviour. Psychology is not the only science which is compelled to make use of concepts which refer to processes and entities not directly observable. No one, for example, has ever seen an atom, or an electron, yet these are considered to be objectively established as facts of experience. It is absurd, therefore, to object to the hypotheses of conscious and unconscious processes on the grounds that the evidence for them is indirect. If the hypotheses of conscious and unconscious processes provide a means of making intelligible phenomena which hitherto had defied all attempts at comprehension, and if they further enable some control of these phenomena, then the hypotheses are fully justified. And indeed if one wanted conclusive evidence of the validity of these concepts one has only to read Professor Watson's book on Behaviourism. For he very freely makes use of subjective concepts to describe facts of behaviour which, it is clear, could only

with difficulty be compressed into the terminology of Behaviourism. A few examples of this may be given.

Watson commences his book with the proud boast that the Behaviourist "began his own formulations of the problems of psychology by sweeping aside all subjective terms such as sensation, perception, image, desire, purpose and even thinking and emotion as they were subjectively defined". A veritable cleansing of the psychological Augean Stables! But we find, in spite of this magnificent flourish, that Watson smuggles in subjective terms, particularly Freudian terms, when the meaning he wishes to convey defies expression in his own terminology. Thus modern views on the punishment of criminals and children, he affirms, "have as their basis the old religious *masochistic* practices of the churches. . . . whipping is used more often than not as an emotional outlet (sadistic) for parent or teacher."¹

Now, masochism and sadism are definitely subjective terms. They refer to mental states wherein sexual pleasure is experienced from receiving or inflicting pain, respectively. Such tendencies probably exist in all of us, to a greater or lesser extent, though subordinate to the act of intercourse. But in their extreme form, as in the examples given by Watson, they are perversions of the sexual instinct, exhibiting, that is to say, a heightened sexual pleasure, which leads to their choice as modes of sexual behaviour in preference to normal outlets. For Watson to recognise that there are sadistic impulses which require "emotional outlet" is to admit the existence of the very subjective factors which his psychology claims to be illusory. Or, in other words, the problem of why some people feel impelled to obtain gratification by sadistic or masochistic practices is one which defies solution in Behaviouristic terms. For clearly there must be involved psychological impulses sufficiently strong to impel the individual, very often against his conscious volition, to commit serious anti-social acts. These individuals have often been trained (or conditioned)

¹ *ibid.*, p. 183-4.

in the best of social taste, yet they cannot restrain these compulsions to commit so-called sexual offences. On such aberrations, Behaviourism is unable to throw any light whatsoever, a serious shortcoming, as they form part of that vast and important field of psychology comprising the neuroses and psychoses. Watson is not completely unaware of the inadequacy of Behaviourism on this score. He tries, however, to pass it off in a jocular manner. "If," he says, "I got to the point where I could not pick up my knife or fork, if one arm became paralysed or if I couldn't visually react to my wife and children, and a physical examination showed no organic lesion of any kind, I should hasten to my psycho-analytic friends and say, 'Please, in spite of all the mean things I've said about you, help me out of this mess'." ¹

One more example may be given to show that Watson is compelled to recognise that the observable behaviour of an individual very often masks a motive the existence of which cannot be directly observed and strictly therefore lies outside the purview of Behaviourism. (Incidentally, this example shows that Watson's "scientific" psychology has not saved him from the most reactionary notions, politically.)

"People are lazy. Few want to work; the sentiment of the times is all against it. The least work and the sloppiest you can get by on is the present order of the day in most industries. The worker, be he executive, foreman or manual labourer, often *rationalises* it to himself in this way: 'I am not working for myself; why should I slave for a corporation and let someone else get all the profits of my work.'" In this way the perfectly normal reluctance of the worker to exert every ounce of his energy to increase the profits of his boss, is seen by Watson to be a rationalisation, screening an innate laziness and desire to avoid all work. The validity of this example is not the point of consideration. The question is, do underlying, but not directly observable motives to word and deed, exist?

¹ *Behaviourism*, p. 301.

For Behaviourist theory ridicules the idea that overt behaviour may simply be a screen for underlying motives. But the use of the term "rationalise" in the above example is, however, a tacit recognition that real motives are sometimes screened from direct observation and other "reasons" proffered in their place. Thus we may say that what people say and do, i.e., their observable behaviour, *together* with their motives for thus saying and doing, comprise the whole field of psychology. But the Behaviourist, says Watson, is only concerned with the saying and doing. He thus omits at least half of the field of psychology from his study and probably the most important half. And in using the term "rationalise", Watson is unwittingly acknowledging the existence of a psychological realm which lies beyond that comprised by observable behaviour. Indeed, to concentrate on the latter only, may, under certain circumstances, mean attending to acts and words which are intended to mislead and to obscure real motives. It is not surprising that as yet Behaviourism has thrown no light on such important forms of emotional expression as religion, art, mythology, etc. For these activities represent conscious, more or less rationalised expressions of inner, subjective processes. They defy explanation in terms of mechanically acquired conditioned reflexes.

Finally, we must consider the argument advanced by Behaviourism against introspection, as a psychological method, for here it may seem to be treading on firmer ground.

Introspection is the turning of the mind inwards in an effort to describe one's own state of mind, "pecking in suddenly and catching it unawares, as it were", as Watson phrases it. The objection is that science cannot be based upon the reports of each individual on his own private state of mind. Science depends on objective data, data which can be checked and tested by others besides the original experimenter. No one else can experience another's state of mind, which seems, in consequence, to deprive introspection of any value as an objective method. The

answer should be evident. The scientist in any particular sphere is above all a trained observer of the phenomena within his sphere of enquiry. He is able, by virtue of long and careful study, to discriminate between superficial aspects and the underlying reality of his subject matter. He attempts to eliminate, though never quite successfully, his own personal predilections, examining the data before him dispassionately and objectively. Very often, as in the case of physics, he has to be content to deal indirectly with his subject matter, inferring from a study of effects the nature of that subject matter. This, after all, is the position of psychologists. The individual psychologist, it is true, is only directly aware of his own conscious states, and only indirectly of the conscious states of others. But this need not prevent him from studying the conscious processes of others objectively. Provided he can assume the necessary dispassionate attitude he is under no greater disadvantage than any other scientist who has to be content with indirect evidence. It is not merely upon his own introspections, as the Behaviourist would seem to suggest, that the psychologist bases his theories of subjective processes, but also and mainly upon the careful study of the introspections of others. Nor is the scientific psychologist content merely with the accounts as given him by other individuals of their introspections. For he knows that there is a vast difference between an individual's account of his mental processes and the real content of that individual's mind. The average individual is far from being an expert observer even of his own mental processes. But the value of the individual's own description of his mental processes for the psychologist is that it furnishes a clue to their underlying unconscious causes. The psychologist may be much more interested in how an individual describes his mental states, where he hesitates, what he hurries over, than the actual things which he describes. In other words, the face value of introspection is not the whole concern of the psychologist any more than the immediate appearance of the subject-matter of any other scientist is all he is

concerned with. The psychologist has to get behind these conscious statements to their unconscious elements. And in so doing he has to be exceedingly careful to avoid allowing his own unconscious tendencies to determine his interpretations. For it is enormously more difficult to take an objective, dispassionate attitude towards the introspections of others than it is to examine, say, a variety of rock formations with a view to ascertaining their age. These difficulties are due also to the resistances evoked in the mind of the individual psychologist by the unpalatable facts which psychological research reveals.

It is undoubtedly a fact that every step which science takes in the direction of understanding man, tramples on some illusion or conceit which he has long entertained about himself. We can recall the opposition with which the biological theories of Darwin were met. It is not surprising therefore that psychological theories which demolish even more dearly held conceits have awakened deeply-rooted opposition in the minds of even the most clear thinking individuals. The difficulties involved in taking an objective attitude towards the subject matter of psychology are fully recognised by Freud. He recommends that every practising psycho-analyst should submit himself to a process of psycho-analysis by which he may be freed from his own unconscious biases. In this way he will be better able to deal objectively with the introspections of his patients. And in order that his patients may give an account of their psychological processes, as little influenced as possible by conscious attitudes which make for reluctance in the individual to tell his most intimate thoughts and desires, the psycho-analyst uses a process known as "free-association". By this method the patient is encouraged to abandon deliberate control of his thought processes and to tell the analyst whatever appears into his mind, however irrelevant and absurd it may appear to him.

Thus Freudian psychology is fully aware of the dangers of introspection. But it does not, merely because the process is so hazardous, abandon it. For this, in effect, is

what the Behaviourists do. They perceive so many difficulties in the process; it appears to them to be so uncertain that they renounce it altogether.

We may say, therefore, that in its exaggerated attempt to be objective, Behaviourism succeeds only in shutting itself off from much that is important in the psychological world. In fact, this exaggerated objectivity is an inverted idealism. For just as idealism, taken to its logical conclusion in solipsism, denies any possibility of knowledge of the external world, so Behaviourism denies any possibility of knowledge of the psychological, inner world. And as solipsism finally denies the possibility of any knowledge whatsoever, so Behaviourism denies that there is a process of knowing at all.

Let us turn now to psycho-analysis. I shall attempt to show that the basis for a science of psychology has been laid by Sigmund Freud. In the first place, Freud has avoided the error of those materialists who regard thought in terms of physiological processes, and the error of the idealists, who regard thought as primary and unfettered by laws of causation.

Freud views mental life as activity, but activity proceeding according to ascertainable laws. With regard to the illusion of mental freedom which is characteristic of all idealistic philosophy, he says:

"It is remarkable how little respect you have, in your hearts, for a mental fact! Imagine that someone had undertaken a chemical analysis of a certain substance and had ascertained that one ingredient of it is a certain weight, and so many milligrams. From this weight, thus arrived at, certain conclusions may be drawn. Do you think now it would ever occur to a chemist to discredit these conclusions on the ground that the isolated substance might as well have been some other weight? Everyone recognises the fact that it actually had this weight and no other, and builds further conclusions confidently on that fact. But when it is a question of a mental fact, that it *was* such an idea and no other that occurred to the

person questioned, you will not accept that as valid, but say that something else might as well have occurred to him! The truth is that you have an illusion of a psychic freedom within you which you do not want to give up. I regret to say that on this point I find myself in sharpest opposition to your views."¹

This view that psychological processes are strictly determined is called psychic determinism. Without such a belief there could be no science of psychology; for then no general laws of psychological phenomena would be discoverable. This illusion of psychic freedom is a universal fact of experience. It has helped to strengthen the idealistic claims for the omnipotence of thought and constitutes a formidable barrier to the development of psychology as a science. The explanation of this illusion has been rendered possible by psycho-analytical theory. Psycho-analysis has made the central point of its teachings the fact that a large part of the mind is unconscious in character. These processes take place outside normal consciousness, yet exert an important influence upon it. In fact, conscious behaviour is often the end product of a long chain of unconscious events. Since, therefore, the causes of a conscious idea may be completely unconscious, the idea appears to the individual to have appeared spontaneously from nowhere, so to speak. He, consequently, has an illusion that ideas have no causes, an illusion, that is to say, of psychic freedom. (The Behaviourists would of course ignore this fact of the universal illusion of psychic freedom. They would declare it to be a product of introspection and itself "illusory". But illusions are psychological facts and cannot be dismissed in this cursory fashion.)

In its affirmation of the principle of psychic determinism, Freudian psychology takes its start from a scientific foundation. It asserts that psychological life, in the same way as the subject-matter of other fields of scientific research, conforms to causal laws. It declares that psychological

¹ *Introductory Lectures*, p. 38.

theories must therefore be constructed in the same way as other scientific theories, namely through patient observation of relevant data and the development of generalisations which adequately define and describe the qualities possessed by this data. Do the theories of psychoanalysis fulfil these requirements of scientific thought?

Let us consider more fully the theory of the unconscious mind, mentioned above. It is a necessary means of establishing what has been insisted upon in the earlier part of this section, namely that man, in his relationship with the external world, contributes an active, striving side. Thus the basic problem for psychology is the nature of this activity. The Freudian theory of the unconscious takes a tremendous step forward in the answering of this problem. It does so by representing the unconscious mind as essentially active, as containing the instinctive impulses which in their urge for gratification impel the organism to act on the external world.

It has, however, been objected that this theory of unconscious mental processes links psycho-analysis with idealism. Freud, that is to say, in postulating mental processes taking place without the individual's awareness, is giving a mystical character to mental life, and thereby falling into idealistic error. We have seen already that "Freudian idealism" is a term applied to this conception of unconscious mental processes. What, then, is involved in the theory of unconscious mental processes?

We are familiar with the fact that physiological processes can go on without our awareness. It is, for example, universally recognised that the glands, and other visceral organs, are unceasingly working and producing important physiological changes, without our least awareness of them. Thus a patient describes to his doctor the symptoms which alone form the content of his awareness of his malady. But the doctor is able, because he has a knowledge of the internal structure which lies beyond the patient's awareness, to diagnose the hidden cause to the malady.

The real source of the malady is unknown to the patient but its effects are known. And because the patient only knows the effects, would he ridicule the idea that there were unknown physiological conditions which were responsible for his condition? It is clear that a knowledge of these unknown physiological causes is only possible through a scientific study of human anatomy and its reactions to various maladies. But when the psychologist similarly asserts that beyond the individual's psychological states are others, not known to him, yet causally linked to his conscious states, he is received with incredulity. Is this not an expression of the fact that we still cling to the illusion of psychic freedom? *The charge of idealism made against Freud's theory of the unconscious is itself a product of an unconscious reluctance to give up this illusion.* What else would we expect a science of psychology to reveal if not psychological causal links not ascertainable by the ordinary methods of thought? This, after all, is the task of any science; to reveal unknown causal links. The alternative is to deny the need for a science of psychology; to assert that consciousness is the whole content of mental life, that ideas have no unconscious sources, that therefore the illusion that they spring spontaneously into the mind is really no illusion—in a word, the alternative is to affirm the idealistic position. The theory of the unconscious is accordingly a necessary step in the establishment of psychology as a science.

It is true that theories of the unconscious mind existed long before Freudian theories made their appearance. But they were theories developed by idealist philosophers who, while seeing the active character of mental processes, interpreted this activity in a mystical way.¹ There may be, also, many features of psycho-analytic theory which will have to be greatly modified, perhaps even discarded, with the march of scientific discovery. No one more than Freud is aware of the tentative character of many of his concepts.

¹ Thus Schopenhauer and von Hartmann made the unconscious will the active principle in nature.

But one thing is firmly established, in its general outline. That is, that there exist unconscious impulses which exert a powerful influence on conscious activities. How this influence is exerted, the precise relationship between unconscious and conscious processes, is a question still in the process of being answered. The particular way Freud answers it may, and does, arouse considerable criticism. But the formulation of the problem of human behaviour in terms of a dynamic interaction between conscious and unconscious processes may justly be considered to have been fully established.¹ It is then the great merit of Freud to have placed psychology on a scientific basis; to have divested the necessary view of man's mental life as activity of its idealistic mystifications. He has, in consequence, performed a work for materialism comparable to that performed by Marx and Engels. For just as the latter rescued the dialectic from its Hegelian mystifications, so too has Freud given a materialistic basis to the theory of mental activity.

Before concluding our attempt to justify the psychological approach, in general, and the Freudian approach, in particular, there are three objections to the latter which need stating and answering. They are objections which are commonly advanced against Freudian theory, and carry a great deal of weight in preventing a close and detailed study of this theory.

The first objection refers to the existence of rival schools which have developed from Freudian theory and which claim to have supplanted the parent body of theory from which they took their departure. The consequence is that the field of psychological study presents the view of a number of divergent schools, each clamorously declaring itself to be the possessor of psychological truth, and avowing that the others are based upon misconceptions, exaggera-

¹ It is as well to mention here that the conscious processes reflect the external world. In this way, the dynamic struggle is between the external world reflected in consciousness and the instinctive life which reaches out for gratification in the external world.

tions, etc. etc. The intending student of psychology, faced with these cross-purposes, may well draw back in confusion, and conclude that, as yet, there is no well-attested body of psychological fact upon which a science of psychology can be established.

There is a good deal of justification for this view. But a deeper consideration will show that this confused state of psychological science is as might be expected. For Freudian theory is revolutionary in essence. It dispassionately reveals the roots of human psychological life and thereby aims severe blows at the pretence and illusion with which idealistic philosophy has surrounded psychological theory. Just as Marxism drove idealistic conceptions from the field of human history, so too has Freudian theory driven idealistic conceptions from the field of human psychology. And in the wake of Marxism followed schools of revisionists, who attempted to deprive Marxism of its revolutionary content, on the pretext of modernising it, and so on. The net effect was to smuggle in the idealistic content which Marxism had dispelled. And, similarly, schools of psychology have meted a parallel treatment to Freudian theory. They have attempted to make it more palatable; to introduce an idealistic flavour with the "will to power" of Adler, and to abandon determinism with the mysticism of Jung. It is the fate of all revolutionary theories to be subjected to a process of emasculation in order to rob them of their virile materialistic revolutionary essence. For these reasons, the fact that the latter-day adaptations of analytic theory give a confusing appearance to psychological science must not be allowed to deter the serious student. On the contrary, he must recognise that such confusion is the inevitable sequel to the propounding of a revolutionary theory; for idealism does not easily surrender a field which it has jealously preserved as its own. It fights back, not so much by boldly challenging the revolutionary theory, but by sowing confusion with worthless imitations and modifications of the revolutionary theory.

And again, just as elements of Marxian theory are borrowed by modern economists and historians without acknowledgement, so too are there those who, in Freud's expressive phrase, "warm their pot of soup at our fire—without indeed being very grateful for our hospitality."

The parallel treatment to Marxism meted out to Freudian theory should serve to stimulate interest in psycho-analytic theory amongst Marxists. It does not follow, of course, that this treatment is itself an evidence of the correctness of analytic theory. This would be an absurd conclusion. What it does show is that psycho-analytic theory constitutes a real challenge to idealistic outlook, and has provoked numbers of attempts to distort, dilute and destroy its main conclusions.

The second objection is hardly less important. In the course of the development of psycho-analytic theory, Freud has made use of a number of concepts whose utility is mainly in the picturesque manner in which they represent mental activities. It is a well-known method of introducing new and difficult ideas, for the familiar and concrete examples smooth the way for the acceptance of the abstract and more difficult concepts. Thus Freud detected an active process by which events which once had been conscious were deprived of their conscious properties. In this way, much of an individual's experience which if retained in consciousness would have a disturbing effect, is "repressed", is denied conscious expression. This does not mean that it ceases to exist as an activity. It continues to exist, but in the unconscious, and is constantly striving to regain conscious expression. Freud illustrated the process in the following manner. He likened the unconscious mind to a large anteroom in which "various mental excitations are crowding upon one another like individual beings". The conscious mind, he represents by a smaller chamber adjoining the ante-room. On the threshold between these two rooms stands "a personage with the office of door-keeper" who examines the various mental excitations,

censors them, and denies them admittance to the reception-room when he disapproves of them. " . . . Being repressed, when applied to any single impulse, means being unable to pass out of the unconscious system because of the door-keeper's refusal of admittance into the pre-conscious. The door-keeper is what we have learnt to know as resistance in our attempts in analytic treatment to loosen the repressions." Of these concepts Freud says, "Now I know very well that you will say that these conceptions are as crude as they are fantastic and not all permissible in a scientific presentation. I know they are crude; further indeed, we even know that they are incorrect, and unless I am mistaken, we have something better ready as a substitute for them; whether you will continue to think them so fantastic, I do not know. At the moment they are useful aids to understanding, like Ampère's mannikin swimming in the electric current, and, in so far as they do assist comprehension, are not to be despised. Still, I should like to assure that these crude hypotheses, the two chambers, the door-keeper on the threshold between the two, and consciousness as a spectator at the end of the second room, must indicate an extensive approximation to the actual reality. I should also like to hear you admit that our designations, unconscious, preconscious, and conscious, are less prejudicial and more easily defensible than some others which have been suggested or have come into use, e.g., sub-conscious, inter-conscious, co-conscious, etc".¹

We see, therefore, that the use by Freud of these spatial concepts and the personification of mental forces are simple analogies by which complex processes may be illustrated. Only by a distortion of analytic theory can it be said that Freud advanced these concepts as descriptive of what actually takes place, rather than as expressive analogies. One may liken them to the picturesque metaphors frequently used by Marx. When, for example, he refers to the proletarians as the "gravediggers of

¹ *Introductory Lectures*, p. 250.

capitalism"; or when he speaks of the new Socialist society as developing in the womb of the old. It would be a laughable interpretation of these metaphors to suggest that Marx really thought of society as a gigantic pregnant female, who was destined to die in childbirth and be buried by proletarian gravediggers.

We come now to the final objection with which we shall deal. It is that psycho-analysis reduces the whole of the phenomena of human behaviour to the operation of one factor, namely sex.

This, however, is no more true than the parallel objection to Marxism, that it reduces the whole of the phenomena of society to the sole operation of economic factors. What Freud and Marx have done is to emphasise these respective factors, to show how much more extensive are their operations than was generally realised. Freud, undoubtedly, has made sex play a central rôle in the psychological life of the individual, just as Marx established the basic rôle of economics in the development of society.

Freud's sexual theory at first aroused a chorus of moral indignation because it ascribed a sexual life to children. This chorus, however, has largely died down to-day and echoes only in the most reactionary ecclesiastical circles. The idea that sex life comes into existence all at once at puberty has been replaced by the idea of a sexual developmental process which begins early in childhood. The details of this developmental process, the stages through which it passes, are not definitely established. But the fact that such a developmental process takes place, forms the basis from which all serious students of child-psychology begin to-day.

There is another aspect of Freud's sexual theories which is more speculative than the above. That is the suggestion that the cultural activities of life draw a psychological strength from the sexual instincts. The sexual instincts, according to Freud, may find satisfaction in a number of activities whose relationship to sexual needs is often difficult to perceive. The fact, however, that sexual instincts

may obtain an indirect gratification is generally admitted. Thus, few people would deny that the individual who is impelled to spy on women while undressing, the "peeping-tom", is satisfying a sexual curiosity. In other words, the impulse to look, to examine, to enquire into, which we sum up in the term "curiosity", is admitted, in this case, to derive from a sexual source.

But do we equally acknowledge that those people who, in the name of public morality, keep watch on parks to detect "indecent" behaviour, are satisfying a sexual curiosity? No one would suggest that this was true of the Bishop of London, for example, when he reported, "We are doing all we can to get the young people's minds away from all this silly sex question, and to turn them to things that will do them good. The Public Morality Council watch every cinema, every play, and all the books. We watch the open spaces. I have reported what I have seen in Hyde Park." Still less would it be suggested that a scientist was satisfying, indirectly, a sexual curiosity in his scientific researches. Freud asserts, however, that the latter individuals are sublimating the energy of sexual impulses.

Freud bases his case upon the fact that the sexual instincts, unlike any other, are capable of being satisfied by a wide variety of substitutes, and are even capable of being satisfied in imagination only. Thus, we cannot satisfy our hunger and thirst by substitutes for food and drink. Nor can we satisfy these needs in imagination for long, and live. But the sexual impulses, if denied direct gratification, can turn to substitutes. This is the fact which gives Freud's sexual theory a strong *a priori* case. For the sexual impulses are subject to the most drastic repressions in modern civilisation, which make the seeking of substitute gratifications a prime necessity. Sex is regarded as sinful, discussion of it is banned from "decent" conversation. The exercise of the sexual act is regarded with horror outside certain conditions. Individuals who are sexually mature about the age of fourteen are expected to repress their sex impulses for at least four or five years, and then only to indulge

in them under the approved conditions of matrimony. These conditions must be strictly observed. Any indulgence in the sex instinct outside the bonds of matrimony is regarded as a serious moral crime. In fact, one cleric described such indulgence as a greater menace to "national safety" than "bombing from the air".¹

Is it remarkable that such restrictions on sexual life should impel it to seek substitutive channels?

We have already used the suggestion that our cultural life draws a strength from repressed sexual energy to explain the cultural decadence of modern capitalism. Without Freudian theory, we saw, this decadence can only be empirically noted and regarded as somehow related to the economic decline of capitalism. Freudian theory establishes a link between the fact of economic decline and cultural decadence (see Chapter XIV). This is the merit of Freud's sexual theory. Although, as yet, far from complete, it has already developed sufficiently to enable the linking together of otherwise separate and unexplained facts.

The alternative to this theory is to regard our cultural activities as proceeding from a number of distinct and diverse impulses existing in their own rights. Thus we would have to postulate a love for music, a love for art, of literature, etc., the impulse to enquire, to accumulate facts, all as distinct faculties. What Freud's theory does is to relate these apparently separate activities together, to discover a unity in their multiplicity, to show them as particular expressions of a general psychological impulse.

We may say therefore that Freudian theory, approaching man from the subjective side, tells us what sustains man in his cultural pursuits, what impulses in man respond to

¹ Canon Bickersteth, *The Times*, Oct. 22nd, 1935.—It, of course, is not denied that some restriction of sexual life is necessary. The establishment of organised human society, we saw, involved the use of repressed sexual energy. But there is a world of difference between a healthy rational attitude towards sex, a recognition of the need to regulate it and to sublimate its energies, and the morbid fear of sex expressed in the quotation given above.

the economic and social stimuli of the world in which he lives. This subjective approach, we have seen, has been made necessary by the fact that the economic and social world cries out for change while man's subjective realisation of the need for this change lags sadly in the rear. If we are to harness the subjective life of man to the task of social reconstruction we must study this subjective life scientifically. Only thus can we discover how to overcome the irrationalities of thought and emotion which constitute to-day the most serious obstacles to social change.

